No. 674.] For Week Ending November 30th, 1901. [One Penny.

PEARSON'S

SHORT STORIES

A Weekly Magazine for HOME and TRAIN

Digitized by Google

KAPUTINE

The Best & Safest Remedy for

HEADACHE.

NURSE HILL, of the London Association of Nurses, writes:

"I have seen Kaputine administered to many patients, and can truly say it is a remedy which should have a place in every household."

All Leading Chemists sell KAPUTINE, 1/-. Samples One Penny.

If your Chemist has not KAPUTINE send his name and address to KAPUTINE, HUDDERSFIELD, and we will send you a SHILLING PACKET FREE.

WORTH A CROWN A DOSE.

J. G. GRAVES

50/- 50/-

"PERFECTA" Lady's 14 carat Gold Watch.

Decorated Gold or Opal Dial, Keyless or Key-winding, Jewelled Movement, Handsomely Engraved Gold Cases.

Five Years' Warranty.

J. G. GRAVES' PROTECTIVE SYSTEM Send 5s. with order and the watch will be forwarded to you; if satisfied, complete the purchase in nine more monthly payments of 5s. each; or, if you prefer to send the balance in one sum within seven days, a Handsome Present will be forwarded to you as Discount. If you have the *slightest* cause for dissatisfaction, return the watch, and your deposit will be at once refunded in full.

The Largest Watch-sales Firm in the World.

Catalogue of Jewellery, Watches, Clocks, Cutlery and Plate, and Fancy Goods, Post Free.

J. G. GRAVES, 69 Division St., SHEFFIELD.

GENUINE

SOLID SILVER WATCH FREE.

1/-

(LADY'S OR GENT'S SIZE.)

We guarantee these Watches to be **Solid Silver** and Government stamped, with first-class movements, and far superior to Watches generally sold as Real Silver. Our **Gift Watches** are catalogued at 30/- each, but to introduce our **Bargain Price List** and absolutely defy competition we will send you one of these Watches **FREE** If you take advantage of our marvellous offer which we will send. If you want one, write to us without delay. With your letter send us 1/- by postal order, or stamps, for one of our splendid Ladies' or Gents' Watch Guards, to wear with the Watch, equal in appearance to a £5 Real Gold article. After you receive the beautiful Watch, we shall expect you to show it to your friends, and call their attention to this advertisement, and to mention that the Watch is guaranteed for 5 years.—Dept. F, **Hyde Park Watch Co., Delamere Crescent, London, W.**

IF YOU LIKE

PURE FRUIT JAMS

BUY

PINK'S

New Season's Jams

THE MOST NUTRITIOUS.

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

ATLAS LOCKSTITCH MACHINE.

Guaranteed 4 years. Will work by hand or treadle. Equal in quality and size to any machine 39/- To ensure satisfaction, machine sent on receipt of 5/- P.O. for ONE MONTH'S TRIAL; or, if preferred, to pay 5/- Monthly. Write for terms, Designs, and Samples of work

THE ATLAS SEWING MACHINE CO.,
184a High St., Camden Town, London, N.W.;
63 Seven Sisters Rd., N.; 14 High Rd., Kilburn.

Old False Teeth Bought.

Many people have old or disused false teeth. Messrs. R. D. & J. B. Fraser Ltd., of Princes Street, Ipswich (established 1833), buy old false teeth. If you send your teeth to them they will remit you by return of post the utmost value; or if preferred, they will make you the best offer, and hold the teeth over for your reply. The largest and oldest buyers of old false teeth in the world.

2/9 CHALLENGE TO THE WORLD—OUR WARRANTED TIMEKEEPER, 2/9

With a guarantee to keep correct time for three years, will be sent to any address on receipt of P.O. or stamps value 2/9, and three stamps extra for postage. To every purchaser during this month we give with it ABSOLUTELY FREE a strong Mexican SILVER CHAIN. All we ask of you is to show them to your friends, as by doing so you advertise our business.

GENEVA WATCH IMPORTERS,
148 Old Street, London, E.C.
(Please mention paper.)

Thousands of ladies are riding our beautiful, strong, easy riding cycles. 12 to 15 guinea grades are sold by us at £4 to £8. Cash or easy payments. We sell to **Wives, Daughters, Teachers, Nurses, Clerks, Cashiers, Typists, Bookkeepers, Factory Workers, School Girls,** and others in all grades of wealth and all occupations. Write for circulars and learn how easy you can gain a reliable mount.

SYMONDS' LONDON STORES, 66 Hatton Garden, London.

FOR YOU

A GUARANTEED CURE.

For ECZEMA AND ALL SKIN ERUPTIONS.

A victim, who was cured after five years' suffering, will gladly send full particulars of an inexpensive, guaranteed Cure on receipt of stamped addressed envelope.—**PACIDERMA, 215 Piccadilly, London, W.**

SHORT STORIES

No. 674.] For the Week Ending November 30th, 1901. [One Penny.

Adventures of an Actress.

She stood and gazed at the hated face before her, and from him her eyes went to the prostrate body on the carpet.

All rights reserved.]

Digitized by Google

THE ADVENTURES OF AN ACTRESS.

XVII.—AN OLD MAN'S DARLING.

By DONOVAN MART.

CHAPTER I.

In a conspicuous position upon a hoarding in a Brighton street, was a poster, the portrait of a beautiful girl, with auburn hair and blue eyes, merely a face, yet a wonderful testimonial of the colour printer's art. Beneath the portrait were the words: "Hazel Harlow, the famous actress. For six nights only at the Theatre Royal."

Before the advertisement two men had come simultaneously to a standstill. Both stood regarding the picture in silence. Each was as different from the other in appearance as it would be possible to conceive.

The one was very old, with a benign, almost child-like expression, and long white beard falling over his breast. The other was a man of uncertain age, somewhat shabbily dressed, his eyes hidden behind blue spectacles, his face clean-shaven, his hair long and tawny in hue, a curious combination of shabby gentility and ostentatious carelessness of attire.

The old man's eyes seemed riveted to the poster. Then his lips moved almost mechanically. The other man edged nearer to him, to hear fall from his lips the mysterious words:

"At last! At last! It must be! It must be!"

In a moment the eavesdropper's appearance of careless nonchalance vanished. He looked furtively around him. It was midday and there were very few people about, due to the fact that the season of the year was early winter, and that a raw wind blew gustily and penetratingly from the north-east.

"A beautiful face that!" said the younger man carelessly. "And to think that the owner of it is an actress!"

The old man gave a sudden start, as though surprised in the midst of the most poignant reflections. Then he turned round slowly and fixed his glance upon the intruder.

"A beautiful face, indeed!" he echoed dreamily; "there are none who should know it more thoroughly than I."

"Do you know Miss Hazel Harlow then?" asked the other curiously. "How comes that about?"

There was a far-away look in the old man's face. He had almost the appearance of a person in a trance. There was something uncanny in the way in which his pale-blue eyes fixed themselves upon the face of his interlocutor.

For a moment or so he said nothing. Then, in a low voice, speaking as though the words were dragged from him against his will, he said:

"Her name is not Hazel Harlow. She bears quite another name than that. And to think that after all these years I should see her face gazing at me from the walls of a hoarding."

His words produced an extraordinary effect on his solitary audience, who started violently, as though he had been the recipient of a galvanic shock, and then, recovering himself with an effort, muttered:

"Who is she, then? And who are you?"

Again came a momentary hesitation on the part of the aged stranger. Again it seemed as though he were struggling to keep pent-up within himself the thoughts that surged through his mind. Then, with the same far-away look in his eyes, he murmured:

"She is my daughter, and I must claim her!"

"*Your daughter!* Imposs—" Then the unkempt stranger checked himself. A hundred sinister thoughts were surging through his brain. "Look here," he went on almost roughly, "let us come to some quiet place where we can have a quiet talk about this extraordinary affair. Perhaps I can be of assistance to you. If she is your daughter, she ought to be restored to you. I would help you willingly. What do you say?"

"Yes! yes! She ought to be restored to me. I have been without her so long! And how I have hungered for her!" The old man turned eagerly to his unknown ally. "Will you really help me?" he murmured. "Can I trust you?"

"You can! You can! There is a small tavern not far from here where we can be quiet and unmolested. When I have heard all I shall know more what to do."

Like a man in a dream the old fellow allowed himself to be led away by the importunate stranger, who, conducting him through three or four streets, finally came to a pause before a small public-house not far from the King's Road, to boldly walk inside and ask for refreshments and a private room.

His demands were speedily complied with.

"And now that we are alone," said he, "eat and drink, and tell me your story."

"But can I trust you? I am an old man, and almost friendless. A poor old man, too. Say that you will respect my confidences as sacred."

"You can trust me implicitly. And if I can I will help you. It was Providence that ordained we should meet. Come, to your tale."

The man spoke incisively, with almost the ring of command in his voice. The grey-beard passed his hand almost wearily through his white hair, and began, in a low, constrained voice, the recital of his tale:

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

"Many, many years ago, when I was quite a young man I fell in love with a woman. We were married and lived happily for some years. Then my wife died, leaving me alone in the world with one child—a little girl—on whom I lavished all the wealth of my affections. The years passed on and she left childhood's paths for those of budding womanhood. Then came a terrible event into my life. She disappeared, leaving a note to tell me that she had fallen in love with a man, and gone to marry him. She was only a slip of a girl, too young, I had thought, to think of such things. From that day to this I have never set eyes on her, and now it is her portrait I see smiling down at me from the hoardings of Brighton. There is my story. Now you can understand what I meant when I told you her name was not Hazel Harlow."

Silence followed the simple story. Its hearer seemed too much amazed for speech. He could only sit and stare at the old man like a being bereft of his senses.

"Then what is her name?" he muttered mechanically. "Who is she?"

"Her real name is Miriam Lee," came the quiet answer, as though the speaker saw no cause for surprise or, indeed, noticed that his words had had any such effect. "That is my name, Lee—Gideon Lee."

"Miriam Lee!" the stranger muttered dazedly; "not Hazel Harlow, but Miriam Lee!"

"Yes. And you will help me get her back—my little Miriam. You have promised me you will."

Gideon Lee's words had an extraordinary effect upon his companion.

"Help you!" he cried, springing to his feet; "of course I will. Nay, more, I'll see that your long-lost daughter is restored to you. Come, tell me where you live, and all about yourself. But we must be cautious. She'll not come to you unless you set about your work becomingly. Otherwise, why did she leave you, and why has she never communicated with you all these years?"

The old man looked at the speaker hungrily. He was evidently only too ready to receive advice.

"Yes," he echoed dreamily. "We must be cautious. My little Miriam! After all these years!"

CHAPTER II.

THE afternoon was already far advanced when Gideon Lee and his unknown, unexpectedly-found ally parted, to meet again, as had been arranged, on the next day.

As the stranger found himself alone again he made the best of his way to an obscure street in Hove, to admit himself into a dingy house, from the front window of which dangled a fly-blown placard, bearing the one word "Apartments."

The stranger entered a room on the first-floor, and, carefully locking the door, proceeded to at once effect a metamorphosis as startling as it was irregular.

His blue "goggles" were removed, the tawny wig that disguised his close-cropped hair was removed, and he stood in his true guise, that of a middle-aged, dark-eyed, dark-haired man, with his cruel mouth made more cruel by the coal-black eyes above it. A small fire was burning in the grate of the room, which had no features to render it in any way different from the usual type of apartments such as are to be met with in cheap sea-side lodging-houses.

The man flung himself into a chair before the fire, and poking the embers up into a blaze, drew forth a cigarette, and began to smoke with almost vicious energy.

"So this is where your 'love' has led you, Horace Caldecott!" he muttered; "this is the result of all your efforts. Instead of a mansion in town and the enjoyment of wealth that is at least your own, you are forced to hide in a Brighton lodging-house like a hunted fox in a hole. Curse everything! And curse especially that officious fool who calls himself Eric Monteith. But for him Hazel Harlow might have been yours by now, and you might have been footing it with the best of them, instead of hiding here with detectives watching round your London house and a price upon your head. And what have you gained by it all? Nothing! Absolutely nothing! And yet"—his voice changed—"I love Hazel Harlow; aye, love her with an all-consuming passion. To think that after all I've gone through she is still as far away from me as ever. Wait a bit, though! What about this old madman, Gideon Lee? Can it be that Fate means to make up for everything by this new turn of the wheel?" He rose to his feet, and began pacing feverishly up and down the narrow chamber.

"It's about the last card," he went on, "and yet I'm ready to risk all in playing it. If only Gideon Lee plays his part properly he'll be the unconscious means to deliver Hazel into my hands. What else is there left for me? How little did I dream, years ago, when I first saw Hazel Harlow, that my life would be ruined by the very passion that grew up within me at the sight of her fresh, fair young beauty. And yet it's true. The only thing that I care for in all the world has—notwithstanding all I have attempted—been denied to me. They say that the more difficult a thing is to attain the more essential it becomes to the would-be attainer. I have lost my soul, as it is, for Hazel Harlow. Shall I, then, lose it for nothing? No, a thousand times no. Fortune has put Gideon Lee in my path; if I can use him to attain my ends, so be it. Yet I must be cautious. No breath of my being in Brighton must assail Hazel's ears. And when I strike it must be with certainty that the blow will fall. Gid on Lee! Is he maniac, or does he really believe the story he told me? Time will show that. He's fully primed now, and if only he obeys my orders Hazel shall be, must be, once more within my power. And this time—" He broke off abruptly and passed his hands across his feverish eyes.

Thus ran the unhappy wretch's stormy thoughts. Notwithstanding all that he had gone through, all the misery his base passions had encompassed, the pitiable ebb to which his own fortunes had been reduced, the fever of his desires still burnt brightly within him. It was Hazel, and Hazel alone, towards whom his every instinct turned.

With the cunning of a snake he had followed the track of the *Good Samaritan* Company, taking good care to let no trace of his presence be known to Hazel or her friends and counsellors. Ever since his last desperate venture at Nottingham he had known that no effort would be spared—even if he had not realised so much before—to run him to earth. And were he to be taken he knew that a long term of imprisonment awaited him.

And now Fate had thrust forward Gideon Lee upon the stage of his base drama. To the old man he now looked to be the means of delivering the unsuspecting Hazel into his hands. He had found a cat's-paw. He would take good care to make use of it.

Yet he had reckoned without Gideon Lee.

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER III.

BRIGHTON sea-front wears a very different aspect in November to its summer garb. In August crowds of excursionists, trippers, German bands, and holiday-makers in general, all combine to endow it with an atmosphere of life and jollity.

But in November only a fashionable few walk up and down the marine parade, few that is compared with the summer throng, and yet infinitely more "swagger" and select.

Hazel Harlow and Jenny Lovelace were among those walking upon the front one morning in the middle of the week devoted by the *Good Samaritan* Company to "London-by-the-Sea."

The two actresses were talking gaily to one another, both infected by the keen vigour of the sea air.

"I wish we were here for a fortnight," said Hazel.

"So do I," echoed her companion fervently. "That's the nuisance of being 'on the road.' Just as a nice place is reached it's a case of 'move on' before one has time to really settle down."

The two girls had, just as Jenny finished her speech, been preparing to retrace their steps, by reason of the fact that they had come to the end of the long promenade by the Hove sea wall, when suddenly a voice in Hazel's ear caused her to halt.

She turned round to find an old man at her elbow, a man with long white beard and a face like a winter apple, with two remarkably clear, pale-blue eyes set beneath bushy white eyebrows.

"Pardon me for intruding myself upon you," he said, in a mild, rather tremulous voice, "but I am, I must be, addressing myself to the lady known as Miss Hazel Harlow?"

Surprised though she was, there was still such an undeniable tone of gentle friendliness in the old man's voice, that Hazel could only answer gently:

"I am Hazel Harlow. How can I serve you?"

"No harm shall come to you, if you will only put yourself into my hands."

"By granting me a very great favour," came the soft reply; "and in granting that same favour you will be at the same time, I believe, benefiting yourself. It is not much that I have to ask you—only that you will let me drive you to my house in Rottingdean in my carriage." And he pointed to where a handsome carriage and pair was drawn up against the curb on the opposite side of the road.

"But you are a perfect stranger to me," she stammered. "I don't understand."

"Not so much a stranger as perhaps you imagine," came the quiet answer; "believe me I wish you no harm; on the contrary, I wish you only the best and the brightest that life can offer. You can trust me without reserve, my dear." He spoke almost with fatherly tenderness.

Hazel's brain was in a whirl. She turned to Jenny,

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

as if for guidance in this unexpected episode, and Jenny, who had followed the conversation with the greatest interest, was almost as much astonished as was Hazel herself. And yet it seemed impossible to connect this beautiful old man with anything sinister or base.

The old stranger looked wistfully into Hazel's face.

"I am an old man," he resumed quietly; "an old man who has seen much trouble in a long and not altogether uneventful life. You are young and beautiful, and when your eyes are opened you will understand why I have asked you to accompany me to my home. Believe me, I repeat again, no harm shall come to you if you will only put yourself into my hands. If you do it will only be for your own good."

Feminine curiosity now got the better of Hazel's latent suspicions. There was something irresistibly pathetic in the way the aged stranger spoke. It was impossible to connect him with villainy.

"Very well," Hazel said. "I will come with you. I will trust you, for I feel sure that you do not mean me any harm."

"God bless you for that!" came the answer. Then Hazel turned to Jenny.

"Have no fear, Jenny," she said. "I am sure this old gentleman means me no harm."

Jenny was too much astonished to offer any opposition to her friend's intention, and yet it was not without a slight feeling of foreboding that she watched her accompany the old man to the elegant equipage, enter, and drive away along the sea front.

"I wonder if I have done right in letting her go?" she murmured to herself; "but surely that old gentleman is incapable of wickedness. I wonder what he meant by saying it was only for Hazel's good? Who knows? Perhaps it is. Perhaps he has become smitten with Hazel, and wants to leave her all his fortune. He seems a nice old man. Ah, well! let's hope for the best."

In the meantime the carriage was bowling swiftly along towards Rottingdean. But little conversation passed between Hazel and her companion on the drive. The old stranger seemed curiously preoccupied, and little inclined for conversation, though every now and then his old hand would take hold of Hazel's and pat it gently, almost lovingly, accompanying the gesture with a glance of tender solicitude at the beautiful face beside him. Thus the farther they drove the more mystified Hazel became as to what on earth could be the meaning of this extraordinary excursion.

Eventually the carriage reached Rottingdean, and entered the lodge gates that opened on to a long carriage drive leading to a big white house set amidst the trees. The old gentleman helped Hazel to alight, and the door of the mansion was thrown open. In a moment a fierce baying resounded through the house, and six great wolfhounds dashed forward and began fawning round their old master and Hazel, who shrank back in some alarm at so unlooked-for a welcome. But the great dogs seemed gentle enough, and at a word from their master slunk away whence they had come.

Gideon Lee, for he of course it was, conducted Hazel into a beautifully furnished room with a great open fireplace, from which a huge log fire threw a cheerful warmth into the apartment.

Carefully closing the door, Lee motioned Hazel to a seat. Then he turned to her, and she saw that his eyes were full of tears.

"At last, Miriam," he murmured brokenly; "at last you have come back to me, after all these years!"

Hazel stared at the speaker in the blankest astonishment. What on earth could he mean?

"Miriam?" she echoed faintly. "Why do you call me Miriam?"

"Oh, there is no need for further deception," came the answer; "we are here alone now. You are back in your old father's home; the old father who has waited and yearned for you so long; who has hoarded up his money and all these beautiful things for you. I knew it was you when I saw the poster in Brighton. Ah, Miriam, you should never have run away from me; but now you have come back to me, you won't leave me any more."

Hazel rubbed her eyes. Was she dreaming? The old man might as well have been talking Greek. What was all this about Miriam, the daughter who had run away from home?

"But my name is not Miriam," she said gently, "my name is Hazel—Hazel Hazlow—and I am the daughter of a farmer who lives in the Midlands. You must be labouring under some delusion if you think I am someone else."

A puzzled expression came into the old man's face. He looked fixedly at the beautiful girl before him.

"No, no," he said excitedly; "I know I am not making a mistake. You are Miriam, my long-lost daughter Miriam!" He went across to a bureau that stood at the far side of the room, and, after fumbling about in a pigeon-hole, produced a daguerreotype, a relic of the days when photography was in its infancy.

"See, here is your mother's portrait," he said. "You are just like what she was at your age."

Mechanically Hazel took the leathern case inclosing the portrait in her hand. It was the face of a very beautiful woman, but so far as she could see, there was very little likeness between herself and the original of the daguerreotype.

Gideon Lee looked at her fixedly as she regarded the portrait. She handed it back to him, and said:

"This is not the portrait of my mother. There must be some mistake!"

"Why do you say that? Why do you say that?" murmured the old man; "when you know that you are Miriam Lee, my daughter. Why do you persist in denying it when all that I have is yours. Now that I have brought you back to share my home with me; to be the light of my declining years, and never to leave me again—never, never, never!"

Hazel now began to feel vaguely alarmed. It was plain that the old man was possessed of the idea that she was deceiving him; that she was really the Miriam Lee, his daughter, whom, as he said, he had lost, so long ago. How could she convince him of the truth and escape from a position that she began to realise might lead to an awkward development? Vainly she cast her eyes about as though to seek some elucidation of the mystery. The old man noted her action.

"No, no!" he said, with a strange ring of cunning in his voice; "you can't escape, Miriam. I haven't brought you back home to send you away again. You stay with me now; you have been away long enough. Think how happy we will be together here, you and I, Miriam, my daughter, my little queen." And he advanced to her side and taking her hand with an almost reverential air, he raised it to his lips.

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

Hazel was a prey to the most mingled feelings. She could not help feeling somewhat drawn towards this curious old man, who, she became momentarily more and more convinced, was suffering under a delusive vision. She could not feel alarmed, because it was evident that did she but humour him, he would only treat her with the affection and respect that he evidently felt due to his returned child. Yet she was rather perturbed in her mind as to how she was to give him the slip.

"But think," she said, coaxingly, "I cannot stay with you now for always. I have no things here, and besides I must play at the theatre to-night. I have other obligations to think of."

"The first obligations of a child are towards its parents," answered Gideon Lee, brushing her pleadings aside; "and I have been waiting for you so long that I cannot let you go lightly now. No, Miriam, you must stay with me."

These words convinced Hazel of the truth of what she had already suspected, namely, that the old man's mind was unhinged. She regretted now the kindly impulse that had led her to accept his invitation. The case was beginning to assume a rather serious complexion. This old man, gentle and harmless as he seemed to be, might perhaps turn out to be possessed of qualities quite the reverse of pleasant if she persisted in attempting to thwart his purpose. Thank goodness, it was early in the day yet; perhaps later on she might find some means of making good her escape.

CHAPTER IV.

It is perhaps needless to state that Horace Caldecott had been a witness of the meeting between Gideon Lee and Hazel upon the sea-front. Disguised as a seedy tramp he had lurked about watching with the intentness of a hawk. But his amazement was profound when he saw Gideon Lee escort Hazel to the elegant carriage and pair and help her inside. He watched the carriage drive away in the blankest astonishment.

"What on earth is the meaning of that?" he muttered to himself. "Who is this old fox, Gideon Lee? I thought he was some seedy old chap living in a little one-storied cottage at Rottingdean. There's more in this than meets the eye. Let me recall the conversation we had together the day before yesterday. He seemed as innocent and as helpless then as a baby. 'How am I to get my daughter to come home with me?' were his words. And what did I say? I said, 'It will be useless for you to go up to her and say, Miriam Lee, you must come back to your old father,' or anything like that. 'You'll have to use strategy in this game, Mr. Lee. If the girl had wanted to come back to you she would have come back of her own accord long ago'—for of course I wasn't going to tell him that I knew his Miriam was really Hazel Harlow. 'No,' I said, 'you must go up to her and ask her to come and see you at your cottage, and pitch some high-flown yarn that would get her to come back to you.' And he seemed to swallow it all up; thanked me most profusely; hoped I would come to Rottingdean and be introduced to his dear daughter. Told me the time when he was going to try and find her. And now he turns up in a carriage and pair and drives off Hazel like a duchess. There is something in this that I don't quite understand."

The crafty villain felt somewhat uneasy as he realised that he had been duped by Gideon Lee. Yet on maturer reflection, he thought it possible that Gideon Lee, whom he had already come to look upon as a harmless old lunatic, had other designs upon Hazel than those he had given out.

"Perhaps he wants to kidnap her," thought Caldecott, "and get a reward. If that is his game, well, it will suit me as well as any other. Anyhow, the best thing I can do is to get out to Rottingdean itself and look about me. Anyhow, this is pretty plain; there's only a doddering old idiot between me and Hazel Harlow, and Rottingdean is not a big place. If it is only Gideon Lee I've got to tackle, well—" an evil glance came into his cruel eyes.

But in his estimate of Gideon Lee, Horace Caldecott was woefully outside the mark. The awakening awaiting him was to be a rude one indeed. He determined to traverse the few miles that lay between Brighton and Rottingdean on foot. It would look suspicious if he, in his character of a seedy tramp, were to be seen driving in a hired vehicle. Besides, it was not yet noon, and he felt confident that, for a few hours at least, Hazel Harlow would be unable to escape from the old man's clutches. As he stepped out along the road he had plenty of food for reflection. The evidence that he was able to deduce from the unimpeachable testimony of his own eyesight, namely, the presence of the two-horse vehicle, made it quite obvious that Gideon Lee was not the poor old pauper he had first imagined him. No. It seemed much more likely that he was a man of means, and therefore inhabited one of the big houses in the neighbourhood of the little Sussex village. He felt that his first work in Rottingdean would be to discover, by means of careful inquiries, who Gideon Lee really was and where he lived. He would then be able to formulate some scheme for carrying out his own fell ends.

"If Hazel learns that the old fool thinks himself her father and intends, as I know he does, to keep her with him at all hazards, it would of course be imperative for her to find some means of escape." He mused. "Here comes my chance. So long as the hue and cry is not raised in Brighton by the members of the Company, and that officious fool, Monteith, I am all right. But still, if she does not turn up at Brighton again this afternoon they will probably send out to look for her. No, if anything is to be done it must be accomplished as soon as possible. Thank goodness, I am very adequately disguised, and if I can step in and rescue her, well, it will be a case of out of the frying-pan into the fire, before she realises who her rescuer is."

He reached Rottingdean in the midst of a driving drizzle of rain, having fully matured his plans on his walk. He stopped at a cottage outside the village, and knocking boldly at the door, was confronted by a man in his shirt-sleeves, evidently a farm labourer.

"Good afternoon," he said blandly; "can you tell me if there is a Mr. Gideon Lee living in Rottingdean?"

The man stared at him, evidently taken aback at being accosted with such a gentlemanly voice by a man whose clothes belied his speech, for Caldecott was still in the shabby clothes he had assumed to throw any would-be tracker off the scent.

"Why, yes," answered the man, "if it is old daft Lee you mean. He lives up at the White House. You can see the lodge gates up the road there."

"And what sort of a man is he?" asked Caldecott casually.

The other shrugged his shoulders.

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

"A rum one if ever there was one," he replied. "As rich as blazes, and quite off his chump from all accounts."

Caldecott hesitated. Then he put his hand in his pocket and produced a sovereign.

"Do you feel like earning that?" he said.

The man's eyes glistened.

"It depends," he replied cautiously. Then, unable to contain himself, he blurted out. "You're a rum one to go about throwing sovereigns away. What may your game be, governor?"

The other laughed.

"Ask no questions and you'll hear no lies," he said curtly. "It's a free country, and I suppose I can go about as I like."

"Right you are, governor, no offence," retorted the fellow; "how do you want me to earn that sovereign?"

"Before long," answered Caldecott, "someone is sure to come along and ask the same question that I have asked you just now about old Lee. Yours is the first house in the village, and naturally they will come to you first. The man will probably be a tall, clean-shaven, well-dressed young fellow, and it's very important for old Lee's sake and my own that he should have dust thrown in his eyes. If you will stay here and keep your eyes open, and tell him that no such man as Gideon Lee lives in Rottingdean, well, I'll make that sovereign two, and give you this one as earnest money. I think you'll admit that that is an easy way of earning a bit of money."

The man hesitated. It was a strange request, and although cupidity urged him to close with the offer at once, caution counselled him to adopt wariness. Caldecott noticed his hesitation.

"You needn't be afraid," he said; "you are not implicating yourself in any way. A smart man like you need have no fear that you can't get out of a little hole like that."

He tore open the window and sprang out like a man possessed, the other dog still at his heels.

The man's hesitation fled to the winds before the plausible rascal's words.

"Right," he said; "hand us over the sovereign and I'm your man."

Caldecott smiled, and tendered him the coin. "And remember there is another waiting for you," he said, "if you do as I tell you." And with these words he disappeared in the direction of the White House.

The entrance gates through which Hazel had driven only an hour or so previously were, to Caldecott's disgust, locked. A high hedge shut off the grounds of the house from the road. It seemed at first glance as

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

though there was no possible means of obtaining ingress to the place. But having come so far on his enterprise, Caldecott determined not to let anything stand in the way of the furtherance of his plans. He hurried on along the side of the hedge until at last he came to a place where the bare screen, reft of its summer foliage, was much thinner than it had been near the gate. Even then it was only after some difficulty, and not before his shabby clothes had suffered still more, and he, himself, had received sundry scratches on hands and face, that he was able to crawl through the hedge and into the garden grounds.

With extreme caution he crept out into the open, and across a huge sweep of lawn fringed with cedars and other trees. At first he had determined to try and enter the house by stealth, but on maturer reflection he decided to go boldly up to the front door and demand to see Mr. Gideon Lee. It had of course come to him as an immense surprise to find the old gentleman living in such a splendid mansion, though his astonishment had been tempered somewhat by the pair-horse carriage that had conveyed Hazel out of Brighton.

He walked up the drive where it swept round the head of the lawn and advanced boldly to the door to peal vigorously at the bell. In a few moments the door was opened and, to Caldecott's infinite amazement, by Gideon Lee himself. So surprised was he at this unexpected meeting, that for a few moments he could only stand mutely upon the doorstep and gaze into the beautiful old face before him.

"Well," said the old man blandly, "and what may you want here?" He seemed to have entirely forgotten the meeting that had taken place between himself and Caldecott in the obscure Brighton tavern; to have forgotten, indeed, the very existence of the man who was now confronting him. Caldecott was quick to see this. Fully cognisant now of the fact that the old man was not entirely responsible for his actions, he determined upon cutting his cloth to suit his customer.

"I must have a word with you, Mr. Lee," he said; "and that is why I have come to you so unceremoniously. What I want to say to you concerns your daughter Miriam most acutely."

"My daughter Miriam!" the words seemed to let loose the floodgates of the old man's warped intelligence. "What can you have to say about her? She has only just come back to me."

It was now plain beyond all doubt that Gideon Lee had not the faintest recollection of ever having met this man before.

"But can I see you alone?" continued Caldecott in a quiet voice. "My business will not wait."

"Yes, yes; come inside. We can talk alone in the study."

"And your daughter, where is she?"

"Oh, you cannot see her. But come, let me hear what you have to tell me!"

Caldecott said no more. He perceived that the old gentleman could not be forced to do anything against his will, and so in silence he followed Gideon Lee.

The old man ushered him inside the study and closed the door.

"Now then," he said, "I am at your service. What have you got to tell me about my daughter Miriam?"

"Why this," said Caldecott, in an impressive voice, "that unless you are very careful your daughter Miriam will not be here with you for very long. There are people on her track, people who wish to take her away from you, who wish her harm, and that is why I have come here to-day."

A dazed look crept into Gideon Lee's eyes. The other man's words seemed to have suddenly reduced him to the helplessness of a little child.

"What can I do to save her?" he wailed. "What can I do to save her?"

Quickly the thought flashed through Caldecott's mind, "now is my time, the old man is perfectly imbecile; he will do anything I tell him, if only I harp on the same string sufficiently. The house seems quiet enough: there are evidently but few servants about. I must act quickly, for time is precious, and even now Monteith and his crew may be off on their precious lead's track."

Then he turned to Lee.

"Do," he said hoarsely; "there is but one thing to do. Let me take charge of your daughter for you; at any moment those who wish to take her away from you may be here. Put her into my charge, and I will hold her for you until her pursuers have disappeared again. That is your only chance of saving her."

The effect of his words on Gideon Lee was, however, absolutely the reverse of what he had anticipated. A sudden light blazed up in the beautiful old eyes as Lee sprang forward and cried out in a voice of thunder.

"Take my darling from me, never, never, never! I have been without her all these years, and now that she has been given back to me, do you think I will deliver her up into the hands of a stranger? No, no! a thousand times no! If that is all you have to say to me, you can go whence you came, and leave me to fight my battle alone."

Caldecott shrank back in amazement before such an outburst.

"Go!" repeated Gideon Lee; "go, or——"

His last sentence was never finished. Goaded to sudden fury at this check to his schemes Caldecott flung himself at the venerable figure and hurled him to the ground. The poor old head struck a chair-back in his fall that effectually stunned him; motionless he lay upon the carpet at his assailant's feet.

"Have I killed him?" muttered Caldecott in some alarm, bending down over the prostrate figure. "No, he is only stunned." He turned round with the look of a wild animal in his face; "well, I must take the law into my own hands," he said hoarsely, "and find where Hazel is for myself."

He turned towards the door, but before he could reach it it was opened from without and Hazel entered the room. The scene that met her gaze brought a quick cry from her lips. Horror-stricken she stood and gazed at the hated face before her, and from him her eyes went to the prostrate body on the carpet. With a low cry Caldecott sprang forward:

"Ah, Hazel," he muttered; "so you have come to me of your own free will."

With a scream that echoed through the house the girl shrank back.

"Help! help!" she cried. And help was at hand from an unexpected quarter. The pattering sound of quick, lithe feet, accompanied by a quick snarling sound fell on Caldecott's ears, and the great gaunt wolf-hounds bounded into the room and flung themselves straight at the villain's throat. With a scream of terror he struck out blindly at his unexpected assailants, and then leaping back in blind terror, rushed towards the

Is your photo on page 682?
Digitized by Google

window at the end of the room, the hounds leaping up and mouthing fiercely at him with blood-curdling snarls. He felt the deadly fangs of one of them pierce the sleeve of his coat and draw blood upon his flesh. With a howl he raised his pistol and fired it point-blank at the animal's head. Then in quicker time than it takes in telling, he tore open the window and sprang outlikea man possessed, the other dog still at his heels, for his bullet had found a billet in the brain of one of his attackers.

CHAPTER V.

"WHERE am I? What has happened?" Those were the first words of Gideon Lee on returning to consciousness. He was lying upon his bed, and over him bent the beautiful face of Hazel Harlow, whose one soft white hand was upon his brow, and who was holding a cup of some cool liquid in the other. He gazed in a bewildered fashion into the fair face.

"Who are you?" he murmured. "Your face seems strange to me."

Hazel's heart gave a great throb. What could be the meaning of such a complete change in the old man's behaviour as regards to herself?

"I am Hazel Harlow," she said in a gentle voice; "you have met with an accident. I am here to nurse you."

"A nurse! an accident!" There was a look of absolute bewilderment in the speaker's eyes.

"Yes, yes; but don't try to speak now. Just lie quiet."

"You are very good to me, Miss Harlow. I will try and keep quiet now." Then he went on. "You have a sweet face; you remind me somehow of my lost daughter Miriam."

His words gave Hazel the clue to his behaviour. She saw it all now. Before his accident Gideon Lee had been a witless being possessed with a single idea, the recovery of the daughter who, it afterwards transpired, had died years before, but whom the old man had always looked upon as being alive, and had waited and waited for her return, though those about him knew that such a thing could never be.

Hazel had heard of such things happening. How that a sudden accident would bear fruit afterwards as the means whereby recovery of sanity was achieved, and that was what had undoubtedly happened in Gideon Lee's case. The blow that had deprived him of consciousness had, as it were, struck some cord in the poor diseased brain that had acted as an antidote to the previous disaster that had deprived him of his real understanding. A doctor was sent for and fully indorsed Hazel's suspicions. Gideon Lee was as sane as the sanest.

As for Caldecott, when he sprang madly out of the window with the wolf-hound at his heels, blind, unreasoning terror took the place of the sinister designs of a short time previous. He had still another cartridge in his revolver, and with this he dispatched the second hound, and then fled away to be heard of no more at present. But to show how correct his suspicions had been as to the course pursued by Eric Monteith, the latter did actually drive into Rottingdean with Jenny later on in the afternoon of that same day, when still no signs of Hazel were forthcoming, and did inquire at the cottage for Gideon Lee. True to his word, the labourer stoutly maintained that there was no such man as Lee living in Rottingdean. Eric looked surprised, as well he might, but Jenny was not to be put off with such an assertion.

"The man is lying," she said, in a low voice. "I feel sure of it somehow. He has some reasons for the lie. Let us make inquiries elsewhere."

The man overheard her words and flushed a dull red. He had not bargained for this, and he realised at once that if further inquiries were to be put on foot the whereabouts of Gideon Lee must necessarily be discovered so in a blundering, stupid way, he suddenly said:

"What name did you say?"

"I did not say any name," said Eric. "I merely asked you if there was a white-haired old gentleman, in well to do circumstances, living in Rottingdean, and you answered 'No.'"

"Well, I was wrong," came the sullen answer. "There is an old man living in Rottingdean, a rich old man too, named Gideon Lee. You can see the lodge gates of his house right away up at the end of the road there;" and then he muttered, as if thinking aloud, "anyhow, I got a quid."

Eric's quick ear heard the words.

"Got a quid," he repeated; "what do you mean by that? Who gave you a quid? Here, you had better speak up and say what you are driving at. It will be the worse for you my man, if you don't, for I'm not a sort of person to stand much nonsense."

"A chap came along here some time ago and gave me a quid not to tell you anything."

"And what then?" Eric repeated sharply.

"Why, then he went off to old Lee's at double quick."

A sudden feeling of fear thrust at Monteith's heart.

"Come on, Jenny," he cried, and sped away down the road towards the lodge gates as fast as his legs could carry him with the result that he soon outdistanced Jenny, who hurried after him as quickly as her skirts would allow. The horse and trap Eric left standing outside the cottager's abode.

"Well, I'll keep an eye on the horse, anyhow," muttered the man audibly. "Perhaps I'll make another five bob over that job. Twenty-five bob won't be bad for a day's work."

The lodge gates were open as Eric came up to them; he sped down the drive and up to the front door of the house, noting, to his absolute amazement as he did so, the dead body of a huge wolf-hound lying in the middle of a flower-bed close to the house. He pealed at the bell, the door was opened by Hazel herself in walking attire.

"Why, Eric!" she cried; "how came you here? I was just going to the inn at Rottingdean to see if I could hire a conveyance to take me back to Brighton."

Then, in as few words as possible, she told him the story of what had happened, and how that Caldecott's base scheme had been the means of giving Gideon Lee back his reason. Of course what she and the others never knew was the true story of the meeting of Lee and Caldecott as narrated at the beginning of this story, and as the old man's memory failed him with all the details as regarded this they were never to know the true facts of the case, but the indisputable fact remained that Gideon Lee had regained his senses. When he died some years later he left his property to the girl who had been unconsciously the means of giving him back his reason.

The following week the *Good Samaritan* Company visits Cardiff. While there Hazel is suddenly summoned to London by her father's solicitor, and she has an unpleasant adventure which will be fully described in next week's *Short Stories*.

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

SEEN YOUR PHOTO IN SHORT STORIES?

IF SO, YOU WILL GET £5.

HERE IS THE SCHEME.

We have in our possession a considerable number of photographs of men, women, and children of all grades of society secured for us by our agents, who have scoured the United Kingdom for this special purpose.

Each week we publish five of these portraits, and to each of the persons thus represented we dispatch the sum of £5, on his or her forwarding a claim on a post-card addressed to PORTRAIT DEPARTMENT, "SHORT STORIES," Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Although the persons whose portraits will appear in this competition are quite unknown to us personally, we have their names and addresses in our possession, and, therefore, a claim can be settled at once, without risk of fraud.

We may say that our agents are still at work all over the country. It is, therefore, possible that your portrait may appear at any moment without your knowing it. So you should watch SHORT STORIES.

Is your portrait here? If so, drop us a post-card, and get £5. Five more portraits will appear next week.

All claims in connection with the portraits below must reach the address already given above by Tuesday next, December 3rd. Full names and addresses of the correct claimants will appear in succeeding numbers.

HOW TO MAKE A CLAIM FOR A £5 NOTE.

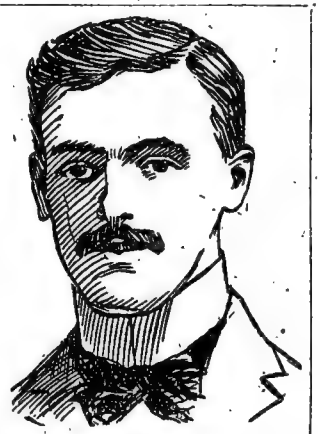
Simply write on a post-card these words:

The Portrait No..... (here put number of portrait) in the current number of SHORT STORIES is mine. Please forward a £5 note.

(Name and full address.)

Persons represented must claim for themselves. Claims made by other people on their behalf will be ignored.

No. 46.



No. 47.

No 48.

No. 49.

No. 50.

Digitized by Google

THE PARTNERS.

THE warm light of an October day was falling over mountain and valley as Mark Wilson slowly made his way up the rocky gorge that lay in the heart of the Black Range. The patient little burro which he led was loaded with his prospector's outfit, provisions to last him two weeks, and a Winchester rifle.

"It's strange what could 'a' become of Ben Armstrong," said Mark, as he picked his way along the margin of a little stream that came bubbling merrily from the hills. "Somethin' must 'a' happened ter him, er he'd 'a' been back afore now."

Leaving his burro, he climbed to a little elevation and scanned the valley closely, but no trace of his missing partner could be seen. Returning to his burro he continued his course up the valley.

Mark Wilson and Ben Armstrong had been prospecting among the mountains of South-western New Mexico for several months, but ill-luck seemed to follow them. Ben had found Mark at Kingston dead broke, and had given him assistance in the way of furnishing him with money to pay his board, and pay the expenses of a prospecting trip into the mountains. Finally the two had drifted into the little town of Bluerock without enough money to buy a meal. They managed to obtain work of the more fortunate miners, but this was not suited to their plans, and one day Ben had said:

"Mark, I don't like this idea of wearing our lives out workin' for other people, when we might be makin' a forchun of our own by keepin' up our prospectin'. Now, s'pose one of us keeps at work hyar ter keep us in grub, while the other goes a-prospectin'. We can do it easy enough, an' who knows how soon we may stumble upon a forchun."

"That's my idee exactly," responded Mark, and from that day the two had worked and prospected alternately, but ill-luck seemed to follow them. Once, when Mark returned from a week's prospecting trip without having discovered so much as the colour of gold, Ben grew despondent, and complained bitterly of their bad luck.

"'Taint no use, Mark," he said, complainingly. "We ain't never goin' ter strike anything—that's my opinion. I ain't got no courage to prospect any more, and I reckon there's nothin' left fer us but ter tramp back ter civilisation where we can get enough ter eat, if nothin' more."

"Gettin' discouraged don't help matters," replied Mark. "As fer me I hain't never had no luck, but I jist keeps peggin' away, an' some time, mebby, I'll run on to a streak o' luck and meck my pile. But I'm powerful onlucky, and mebby if you go out prospectin' this time, an' leave me ter work hyar we'll have success."

"I reckon ye're right; ye're powerful onlucky. I'll try it once more, an' if I fail, I'll strike fer the States."

And so the next morning Ben departed on his prospecting tour, expecting to be gone but a week, yet at the end of two weeks he had not returned. There had been a band of Apaches seen prowling among the hills a week after Ben's departure, and fearing that harm had come to his partner, Mark had packed his effects and gone in search of him, taking his tools and a supply of provisions along.

"Pore feller," said Mark, as he made his way up the valley, "he must 'a' fell inter the hands o' some o' them hostiles——"

He stopped abruptly, for in rounding a clump of bushes, he came suddenly upon a man busily engaged working in the bed of a small stream. So absorbed was he in his work that he did not hear the approaching steps till Mark was almost upon him. Then he rose quickly, and turned to confront the intruder.

"W'y, bless my soul, it's Ben!" exclaimed Mark joyfully, advancing to grasp his partner's hand. At the same instant his eyes fell upon a heap of dull yellow nuggets lying at Ben's side. A single glance told him that they were gold.

A gasp of joy came from Mark's lips.

"It's gold—it's gold!" he cried, in a sort of ecstasy. "Our luck's changed at last—no more diggin' an' sweatin' now fer just enough to live on fer us!"

In his excitement and joy he was about to throw his arms round his partner, but Ben pushed him aside and drew back, an angry light shining in his eyes.

"What aire ye doin' hyar, an' what do yer want, Mark Wilson?" cried Ben, with a gesture of impatience.

Mark stopped abruptly, amazed, stupefied at his partner's strange conduct. His hands dropped helpless at his side.

"W'y—what—what's the matter, Ben?" he said at length, the astonishment upon his face deepening.

"Matter?" responded Ben, "matter enough, Mark Wilson! What do ye mean by follerin' me out hyar?"

"What do I mean? W'y, Ben, I came ter look fer ye—ain't I yer pardner, an'——"

"My pardner? Not you! Didn't I tell ye ye war unlucky? An' I tell ye now that I don't want nothin' more ter do with ye! Clear out o' this! 'fore you have all the sneaks in Bluerock nosin' round hyar!"

He made an angry gesture with his hand as he spoke, while a strange, greedy light shone in his eyes as they wandered to the nuggets that lay at his feet.

Mark Wilson had staggered back as if he had received a heavy blow. He put his hand to his face as if to shut out the sight of his partner's angry face. Then he spoke, his voice sounding strangely hoarse.

"Ben, do ye mean this?" he asked, "ye must be only jokin'—I can't believe it—'taint like ye, Ben."

A bitter oath escaped Ben's lips.

"Git out o' this, I tell ye!" he cried savagely. "I tell ye agin, I don't want nothin' ter do with ye! I found this gold an' it's mine—all mine! Git out o' this, I say—do ye hear?"

He laid his hand on his pistol as he spoke, a savage glitter in his eye.

Mark fell back a step or two. His face grew deadly pale, and he made an involuntary movement towards the pistol in his belt. But a sudden change came over his face; his hand fell at his side, and there was a reproachful look in his eyes.

"Ye don't mean ter shoot me, Ben," he said in a choking voice. "If ye say the gold's your'n it's your'n. I—thought we were pardners—but no matter. Ye found the gold, an' I reckon it's your'n."

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

He turned abruptly, and taking the rein of the burro moved slowly down the cañon.

Ben stood watching the retreating figure, a look of exultation on his face, but gradually his face softened.

"Mebby I wor a leetle too hard on him," he muttered, "but he's powerful onlucky. An'—I found the gold—it's mine. But I don't mind—"

He stooped down, and picking up a small nugget hurried in pursuit of his retreating partner. Mark heard a step behind him, and turned to find that Ben was approaching.

"I don't want ter be hard on ye, Mark," Ben said, "but it's only a pocket I've found—there ain't no more in the gulch, fer I've looked it all over. Hyar, take this, it will meck ye a leetle grub stake."

He threw the nugget at Mark's feet as he spoke. Mark stood looking at him a moment in silence, emotion written upon his countenance. He shook his head slowly.

"No; 'tain't mine," he said. "I'm pore—I'm onlucky but I ain't no dog ter pick up a bone that's throwed ter me. Keep it—it's your'n," and with this he turned abruptly and was gone.

It was nearly noon on the following day when he reached Bluerock. Stopping his burro in front of the cabin that had been occupied by himself and Ben, he entered. Gathering together a few effects that belonged to him, he carried them into a deserted cabin a short distance away.

"I reckon I'll just camp in hyar till I git a stake," he said, and kindling a fire in the rude fireplace, he began to prepare his dinner.

That evening, just as night was coming down over the little town of Bluerock, Ben Armstrong arrived at his cabin, and hurriedly removed the sacks of gold that were fastened to the animal's back. Conveying these into the shanty, he concealed them under a pile of rubbish in a corner of the room.

"I reckon thar ain't no more trampin' among the hills for Ben Armstrong," he said, rubbing his hands with satisfaction as he glanced towards the gold.

He made a light, and glancing about the cabin, continued: "I reckon Mark's moved his traps—I don't see 'em hyar. Waal, I can't say that I'm sorry, for he might be holdin' it ag'inst me that I hadn't used him right. But didn't I find the gold, an' ain't what I find mine?"

Late that night he was awakened by hearing the sound of some one moving about in the room. Instantly he thought of the sack of gold concealed in the corner, and quickly sprang from his bed. He saw the dark outlines of the form of a man and sprang forward to grapple with it, but at that instant he received a heavy blow upon the head, and sank down unconscious.

When his senses returned it was daylight. Weak and dizzy, he staggered to his feet, with only a vague and confused memory of what had taken place. With a vague fear he went to the corner where he had placed the bags of precious nuggets. They were gone; a deep groan came from his lips, and staggering to the door, he threw it open. Some miners were passing, and calling to them, he told them of the robbery that had been committed.

The news created a great deal of indignation among the miners, who were accustomed to look upon such an offence as the gravest that could possibly be committed, and in a short time a crowd had collected at the cabin.

No one seemed able to offer a clue as to who the robber could be till half-an-hour later it was discovered that Mark Wilson was gone and also a horse belonging to Jim Muggins, who lived near by the cabin where Mark had taken up his abode the day previous.

"It's Mark's work, the ugly scoundrel!" exclaimed Ben. "He was the only one who knowed I had the gold an' he's gone and robbed me of it."

"That means a rope if we ketch him," said one of the men as they made ready to go in pursuit of the robber. That Mark Wilson was the one who had committed the robbery there was no doubt in the minds of the inhabitants of Bluerock, and if he were caught summary punishment would be meted out to him.

"Bring some hosses, boys," said Ben. "We must overtake that cuss afore he gits out o' the country."

While the horses were being brought, he seated himself upon the door-step, and took a deep pull at a bottle which one of the men had given him.

"That kinder nerves me up," he said, "but that was a wicked blow that skunk gave me. Makes me feel kinder dizzy yit, drat his ugly hide."

Half-an-hour later, Ben Armstrong, accompanied by the city marshal and two citizens of Bluerock, spurred their horses up the narrow defile that led across the mountains.

They had ridden some three miles when the marshal brought his horse to a sudden stop.

"Look thar, boys," he said, pointing to a clump of bushes where a riderless horse, saddled and bridled, was cropping the grass, "that's Jim Muggins' hoss, shore as shootin'!"

"So it is," affirmed Ben, "the one rid off by the robber. Hello! what's this?" The speaker suddenly reined in his horse, and dismounting, stood bending over the prostrate form of a man that lay in a lifeless heap on the margin of the trail.

The others quickly dismounted and came to Ben's side. The prostrate man was lying upon his face, dead to all appearances, his lifeless hands still grasping the three heavy bags of gold. They turned him gently over, and gazed at his pallid face.

"It's Mark Wilson!" cried Ben, "an' here's the gold he stole from my cabin."

"I reckon ye're about right," said the marshal. "But he's done fer, I allow."

"What's happened to him?" asked Ben.

"Hoss threwed him, I 'low," responded the marshal. "Leastways, he's done fer, if I'm any judge—which saves him from comin' under the jurisdiction of Judge Lynch."

A feeble moan came from Mark's lips, and he opened his eyes and gazed blankly about him.

"W'y, he ain't dead—quick, give me yer canteen, Ben," exclaimed the Marshal, and kneeling beside the injured man, he bathed his face with water, and forced some spirits between his lips. As he did so, he gave a quick gasp of surprise.

"Look, boys!" he cried, "there's the mark of a bullet, or my name ain't Sug Martin!" and he pointed to an ugly wound in Mark's breast, from which the blood was still issuing. "What's the meaning of this? I tell yer thar's something wrong—somethin' about this business that we don't understand!"

The four men gazed at each other in blank surprise.

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

"So thar is," said Ben, "but look, he's comin' to, an' mebby he can tell us how it happened."

Mark opened his lips and spoke in a feeble whisper: "It's all right, fellers," he said, "I got the gold, but he gave me a shot that's finished me."

"Who was it shot ye? How did it happen?" asked the marshal.

"It was Zeb Conner," replied Mark, speaking with an effort.

"What! do ye mean Zeb Conner, the desperado that was run out o' town about three weeks ago?"

"Yes," went on Mark. "I seed him prowling around Ben's cabin last night, an' I watched fer 'im. He got the gold an' was makin' off with it—my pistol snapped an' he got away—I followed 'im on Jem Muggins' hoss—I overtook him up thar on the mountain—we both fired at once—he's lyin' dead up there in the trail—I got the gold from 'im an'—an' was bringin' it back when I found I'd been hit by his bullet, and fell down hyar. It's all right, Ben, I've saved yer gold—but—but I'm powerful onlucky—he's done fer me—"

His eyes closed, his voice ceased, and he lay as if already dead.

Ben seated himself in the grass and lifted the wounded man's head, and placed it in his lap, a look of sorrow and compassion on his face.

The marshal and one of the men hurried up the mountain trail. In a short time the former returned.

"It's jest as Mark said, fellers," he exclaimed. "Zeb Conner's lyin' up thar—only he's not dead—but wounded perty bad. Sez he got the gold and would er got away with it only fer Mark. I left a guard over him, and if I ain't fooled we'll have a chance for lynchin' yit, but it won't be Mark. Pore feller! How is he, Ben?"

"He—he can't last long," replied Ben in a husky voice. "He's saved my gold fer me, fellers," he went on, "me, that's treated him like a dog! We were pardners an' when I found that gold—something—the devil, I reckon, whispered that it was all mine, an' I went back on—on my pardner!"

The dying man moaned feebly and spoke in a whisper, but he was sinking rapidly, and it was plain his mind was wandering.

"Hyar's got the gold—I've brought it back," he said. "Give it ter Ben—tell him that Mark—but never mind—he done me a good turn once; but I—I was onlucky—" His voice died away.

A choking sob came from Ben as he bent his face down to Mark's ear.

"Pardner," he said, his form shaking with emotion, "I want yer ter live—the gold's all your'n, Mark—I don't desarve it—it drives me mad—made me treat ye like a dog—ye that war my pardner. Speak to me, Mark—pardner—take the gold, it's all your'n—"

His voice died in a sob of anguish.

"It's all right now," said the wounded man in a faint whisper. "I've got the gold an'—I'll take it ter Ben. What's that pressin' and burnin' my breast?—blood! It wor Conner's bullet. I'm done for, but they all sed I wor onlucky—"

There was a faint fluttering of the lips, and Ben Armstrong's unlucky partner lay dead in his arms.

H. CLIFFORD.

EVERYBODY

IN

LIVERPOOL, MANCHESTER,

AND THE

NORTH-WEST OF ENGLAND,

SHOULD SECURE A COPY OF

PEARSON'S NEW MORNING PAPER, The NORTH EXPRESS.

1d. 2

FIRST NUMBER OUT

MONDAY, DECEMBER 2nd.

It will be a new halfpenny morning paper.

It will circulate in Liverpool, Manchester, the whole of Lancashire, the West Riding of Yorkshire, the North West Counties of England and North Wales.

It will be worked in conjunction with Mr. C. Arthur Pearson's marvellously successful London paper the "DAILY EXPRESS."

It will contain the best features of the London paper and have in addition very full Local News.

A large permanent special staff of experienced reporters will be stationed at Liverpool and Manchester to gather together and write up Local News in a bright and novel manner.

Special articles on the Cotton and other American Markets will be cabled direct from America by our special expert correspondents.

Private wires between London and the "NORTH EXPRESS" office will bring the news gathered from all over the world by its own correspondents.

Racing will be dealt with by an expert staff.

Mr. J. J. Bentley, President of the Football League and late Football Editor of the "Athletic News," and Mr. C. B. Fry, the well-known International full-back, assisted by a large staff of expert reporters, will be responsible for the Football notes and comments.

Fashion and other matters of interest to women will be attractively treated by the best artists and writers.

Powerful serial stories will be a regular feature and one page will be profusely illustrated every day.

A LONDON AND A LOCAL PAPER IN ONE.

Its Main Aim is

NEWS TRUE NEWS! NEW NEWS! ALL THE NEWS!

Order of your newsagent at once.

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

The Life of Her Lover.

CHAPTER I.

"DULCIE, WHAT HAS HAPPENED?"

"NOT a great deal of difference, Mortimer, except that the gramophone has displaced the musical-box and the cinematograph the peep-show. But the fair itself is just as I remember it twenty years since."

"Come, come," was the answer; "my dear Eustace, you are not going to pretend that you had any knowledge of Steeple Garston Fair at the early age of nine?"

Eustace Lane smiled, and his stern, rather melancholy features softened into an expression of thoughtful amusement.

"You were a virtuous little boy then, Phil," he said; "and I—I was the worst kiddie in Dame Jessamy's school at Garston Royal. One fair-day I played truant and tramped here. By Jove, how frightened and enchanted I was! I must have a glimpse of the genuine hurly-burly—these are nothing but the outskirts."

"Very well," assented his companion; "though if your precious arm gets damaged, you mustn't ask me to face Joan. A man with a splintered elbow has no business in a crowd."

"Rubbish!" declared Lane; "it's as right as a trivet, only your wife's taste for nursing has to be humoured. All the same, you will either have to support me in a judicious degree of rebellion or I make for South Africa and liberty. The mine is in full swing now and I shall be needed."

Philip Mortimer studied the speaker.

"I believe," he retorted, "that you are yearning to find yourself back at the Cape. Joan vows there is some special attraction—of a romantic nature."

Lane shrugged a pair of broad shoulders.

"Mrs. Mortimer," was his comment, "is an inveterate sentimentalist, and fancies everybody to be in the power of Cupid. She forgets that my work lies in South Africa, among stamps and batteries. This confounded elbow brought me to England against my own desire, and now it is on the mend the object of my visit is accomplished."

"On the mend, no doubt," admitted Mortimer, glancing at the brown wrist supported by the loop of a silk handkerchief on the engineer's breast; "but you're yet not delivered from the specialists."

"Pshaw!" cried Eustace Lane; "the whole thing disgusts me. Nice sort of hero I am. The bullet which did the mischief was a criminal's and not a Boer's, and my experience of the war is confined to guard duty on absurdly safe lines of communication, and several months in the enteric wards of base hospitals. I didn't anticipate when I joined the Light Horse that I should leave it unwounded and return to the mine to be shot by a common safe-robber. A truce to me and my grievances; let us investigate the wonders of Steeple Garston Fair."

Philip Mortimer yielded to his friend's determination, and they went forward through the crowd of country folk and gaping sight-seers.

On each side the mob of rustics pushed and jostled between stalls of rough construction and rougher decoration that bordered narrow aisles of clayey soil, cut into ruts by wheels and beaten to mud by iron-shod hoofs, and the no less ponderous attacks of human feet. A patent roundabout, a large circus-marquee—inclosed by a ring of travelling cages—and a cheap theatre, towered over their smaller competitors of wood and canvas, and the blowing of horns, the shouting of showmen, and the din of the steam-organ, mingled in a fierce clamour.

Further off, horses neighed, cattle lowed, the voices of sheep and pigs blended with the uproar, and the occasional shrill fanfare of a riotous donkey pierced the hubbub.

"Don't you suppose," asked the engineer, who had recovered his cheerfulness amid this quaint carnival, "that you ought to buy a yard or so of pink ribbon for Mrs. Mortimer? Who ever heard of a loyal swain returning from Steeple Garston in fair-week without a fairing for his Angelina?"

"My dear Lane," was the tolerant response, "fairings are a tribute bachelors must pay. If you hanker after pink ribbons, purchase a stock of them, not for Joan, but to carry south for the future Mrs. Lane."

The other frowned—a frown that ended in a sigh.

"There is no prospect," he said curtly, "of my creating such a——"

Eustace Lane stopped, his gaze was following down the crowded species of alley a girlish figure whose trim prettiness and shy self-possession contrasted with the plump good looks of the country lassies near her, and drew not a few appreciative remarks.

"Hullo!" cried his escort; "feeling queer? Slip out of the crush; I thought it would be too much for you."

The engineer ignored the well-meant advice; he roused from his absorption to mutter a rapid sentence, muffled by the prevailing clamour. Yet he did not cease his keen observance of the retreating form.

"Phil," he said, "either there are two people in the world more alike than twins, or a person has passed us whom I imagined to be six thousand miles away; I must be sure which it is, Phil—coincidence, or—Dulcie."

With this intimation Eustace Lane began to thread the groups of rustics that lounged in front of the show-booths and their vociferous proprietors. Mortimer tracked him vigilantly. Lane himself was pursuing the figure which had flitted by them an instant before. It was that of a young and graceful woman, clad in a loose, dark ulster; a tiny heel, twinkling under the hem of the long garment, betrayed neat, even coquettish, shoes of tan. A second touch of elegance in her toilet was a black velvet toque, relieved by a cluster of violets, and the rolls of chestnut hair visible to Lane and Mortimer were smooth and characteristic.

The engineer, swerving dexterously among the uncouth multitude, contrived to get on a level with the subject of his attention, and Mortimer saw that he sprang to her, forcing a path in a fashion ominous for his splintered elbow. Struck by a profound curiosity at the latter's unwonted excitement, Philip Mortimer

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

imitated his proceedings; the friends came face to face beside the wearer of the violets and the black velvet.

"Heavens, Dulcie!" gasped Eustace Lane; "what are you doing in England, and in this tag-rag-and-bob-tail, alone?"

A strange light leapt into the hazel eyes which looked up at the astounded engineer—a light that revealed an overwhelming joy, tinged with embarrassment and alarm. The profile of their owner was regular and delicate, her mouth firm and sensitive, her cheeks, at the moment, flushed.

"Mr.—Mr. Lane!" she stammered, "is it really you? I thought you were in South Africa—oh," she broke off, "you have been wounded!"

Lane winced. "A mere accident," he said; "nothing in the least heroic. As for being in South Africa," he added, "I believed you there; is your father in England also? And how, by all that is wonderful, Dulcie—Miss Calderon, do I meet you here?"

Eustace Lane had made his hasty and significant correction after a nervous glance at Philip Mortimer.

Dulcie Calderon drooped and her colour faded.

"Grandad brought me from the Cape," she faltered; "did you not learn of father's death? It was six months ago, in a fight at Kraalfontein. He had been transferred to Kitchener's Scouts; his company was surrounded by the Boers on a march, and father was one of the first shot." The words trembled, and the narrator's lashes were wet.

"I'm sorry," murmured the engineer; "it's news to me. I was stewing in the Orange River Colony on the lines of communication. Then I went back to the mine and helped to start operations again, but got winged in a struggle with some scoundrels who had designs on our opening clean-up. That drove me home to have a tendon transplanted—I was promising myself to be in Capetown, hunting you out, in a couple of months time. I never dreamt of—of your father coming to any harm."

He stood lost in a sorrowful reverie. Dulcie's gaze stole to the interested countenance of Philip Mortimer. Lane observed it and wakened from his meditations.

"This is Miss Calderon, Phil," he said, "the daughter of as honourable a gentleman and as true a friend as ever set foot in stirrup. Miss Calderon, Mr. Mortimer has been a chum of mine since boyhood."

Philip Mortimer acknowledged the introduction by a cordial hand-clasp.

"Charmed to make your acquaintance, Miss Calderon," he assured her; "won't you allow my wife to share the pleasure. My place is at Garston Royal, Lane is staying with us, and we should be delighted to see you and—your grandfather."

"Thanks, Phil!" put in Lane eagerly; "yes, do, Miss Calderon. By the bye, I have never met your grandfather; I doubt if I realised you had one. I must call on him—where can I do so?"

Mortimer was watching his companion acutely—the engineer seemed to be as nervous and confused as a small boy at a children's ball. He surmised that the reason for Eustace Lane's perturbation was the old and romantic passion of which the South African had been speaking so disparagingly.

The girl, thus warmly welcomed, strove in vain to conceal her own agitation and distress.

"Mr. Lane," she said, "you mustn't think of seeing me any more or of calling on grandfather. I wish you had not noticed me just now—many things have happened since we knew each other at Johannesburg, Mr.—Mr. Mortimer is very kind, but it wouldn't be right of me to do as he wishes."

"Dulcie!" cried the engineer, aghast, "I don't comprehend you in the least. What is it that has happened? You are ill; you are unhappy, cannot I help you?"

"No, no, *please!*" and Dulcie Calderon shrank from him. "I must go. I am late already. Good-bye, Mr. Lane; good-bye, Mr. Mortimer."

Eustace Lane would have protested against her ultimatum, but she checked him with so beseeching a gesture that he paused, despite himself. While he hesitated, with a swift, backward glance at his grief-wrung visage, and a cold little bow to Mortimer, she slipped away, and was swallowed up by the crowd.

The engineer leant heavily upon his friend and was silent. At length he roused himself and began to move onward in a slow, mechanical manner, suggestive of the strain he was putting on his powers of self-control.

"You can work it out, Phil," he muttered; "she was the solitary girl I ever took a fancy for. I imagined her in Cape Colony, and wanted to get back to search for her. What is the meaning of her presence in this bedlam, and of the mystery with which she chooses to surround her position? Not that she shall shake me off so; her eyes said she was glad to meet me, if her lips didn't. I must have time to consider—let's strike out of the din."

Mortimer assented, and they strode down the thronged aisle between the booths. Half-way along it bent at a wide angle, and in the angle was a tent of new white canvas with a wooden erection, by way of front, crossed by a blue and red balcony. The hoarding was hung with pictorial advertisements of the entertainment to which the tent was devoted, and from the platform of the balcony, a short, red-bearded fellow in a khaki suit and slouch hat proclaimed its merits by the aid of a huge speaking-trumpet.

"The great Calderon," shouted the wielder of this instrument, "the renowned and only Calderon, the Pistol King! Fresh from South Africa, where he has been loyally serving his country. Admission threepence and sixpence. Walk in and witness the exploits of the Pistol King, in collaboration with his beautiful grand-daughter, the Belle of Johannesburg!"

At this point the crier halted for breath; Eustace Lane was staring at him incredulously.

"Walk in and see the great Calderon!" bellowed the showman, who had regained the thread of his announcement; "he will shoot a shilling out of the fingers of the Belle, he will outline her in pistol shots on a plank target, he will remove an apple from her head with a single cartridge. See the Belle of Johannesburg dance the crystal dance to an accompaniment of shattered glass and flying bullets; see the great Calderon shoot the pips out of a ten of hearts!"

Lane gripped his friend's wrist and dragged him to the entrance of the tent; the engineer's jaw was set and his face pallid.

"It's her for a thousand, Phil," he said sternly; "her and her grandfather. If Dulcie were nothing to me, yet Dick Calderon, her father, did me many a good turn; he wouldn't sleep in his grave did he know that his child was posing publicly in a fair for her bread."

Eustace Lane reached the curtained-doorway, threw a coin to the attendant, and stalked into the shadowy

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

structure. The cheaper parts were packed, the dearer sparsely tenanted. The engineer and his ally chose a couple of chairs in the rear row—before them was a blank series of similar seats, beyond, a low stage and a scene-drop.

As they took their places a bell rang, the scene-drop rose, and a very tall man, with hair and moustaches of a grizzled yellow, stepped to the footlights and spoke a few memorized phrases, so casually delivered as almost to be inaudible. He, too, was dressed in khaki, but wore high boots instead of the cloth putties sported by the trumpeter outside.

"The dickens!" whispered Lane, in his friend's ear; "do you know who that is?"

"The Pistol King, no doubt," said Mortimer, scanning the powerful frame of the orator.

"Impossible," responded Eustace Lane; "he must be an assistant or something. Calderon will come on later with his—his granddaughter. No, that's the scoundrel I've been wanting these three months—the beggar that winged me and shot the manager of the Bilboa Deep dead in his tracks. I only got a glimpse of the villain, but I could pick him out of a regiment, and that man on the stage, masquerading in the King's uniform, is he."

"Go—go easy, Eustace," Philip Mortimer warned him; "didn't you spot the painted atrocities at the door? The man on the stage is Calderon himself. He has gone to the table and is loading a pair of pistols. And here—here comes your little sweetheart herself."

It was true, the girl they had overtaken and conversed with on the fair-ground had appeared behind the footlights and joined, at a sort of gilded bench, piled with weapons, the moustached and booted performer concerning whose identity Eustace Lane had made so singular a discovery. Dulcie Calderon had abandoned her ulster and stood to attention in a khaki skirt and military blouse with leather gaiters. But she had donned neither paint nor powder.

Catching up a pack of cards, she selected several, and retreated to the left of the stage. Unconcernedly she extended them one by one at arm's length, while the marksman, from the opposite side, shot out the pips with unerring accuracy. Dulcie did not flinch or change colour, not even when a silver coin was placed between her finger-tips, to be removed by a bullet, nor when the promised apple was sent spinning by the same agency. The engineer watched, horrified yet fascinated. At last the Pistol King strode to the middle of the stage.

"While the target is being adjusted for the trick in which I outline by bullet holes the figure of my granddaughter," he said, "that gifted young lady will dance her famous——"

He stopped—his glance had fallen upon Eustace Lane. A second the two gazed into one another's faces, the engineer's white and set, the marksman's calm and smiling, and then the speaker finished.

"Her famous crystal dance," he concluded, and turned to the table for a couple of revolvers. But Dulcie Calderon was contemplating the audience with a fixed and anxious stare; she, also, had perceived the presence of Eustace Lane. A moment she looked at him, as if affrightedly, before passing from the stage.

"Did you notice that?" asked Mortimer cautiously; "he saw and recognised you."

"Yes," said the engineer, in a similar fashion; "and so did Dulcie. There she is back and going to dance, poor child! Mortimer, what ought I to do? Calderon is a murderer, and Dulcie is his granddaughter; it would be horrible to betray him."

Mortimer did not answer—he was engrossed by the performance that had begun on the stage. Dulcie had reappeared in a gay frock of pink tinsel, with a silk Union Jack for apron. Evidently her khaki garment was made to slip on and off over it.

The feature of the dance consisted in the rhythmic tossing up, almost to the iron roof of the stage, glass balls of an opaline tint, which were shattered by the upward shots of the marksman's revolvers. The Pistol King moved round the dancer in a deliberate circle. A limelight was played upon the performers, and the sparkle of the broken balls and the crack of the cartridges was effective enough.

The marksman reached the centre of the stage, firing as he went. Suddenly his shoe seemed to slide on the boards and he staggered, bringing his arm to the level. The revolver was discharged—a figure started upright in the audience—to reel and fall, overthrowing a dozen chairs.

The figure was that of Eustace Lane, and the bullet had struck him in the chest.

CHAPTER II.

The Face in the Tree.

"My dear fellow, do go slow; Joan, prop him up on the other side. There's the sunniest bit, at the end of the verandah."

Philip Mortimer walked gently along the covered wooden terrace that skirted the front of his pleasant, unpretentious country residence and overlooked a large old-fashioned garden. Eustace Lane moved with him, supported on his friend's strong arm and aided by a plump, fair-haired little matron in a smart morning-gown.

"Nonsense," he said; "you will turn me into a perfect child. Joan, will you never understand that I am quite convalescent and able to get about by myself?"

Mrs. Mortimer shook her head reprovingly, as she helped to deposit their patient in a wicker chair, and proceeded to arrange a pile of cushions.

"We are not going to risk a set-back, my reckless cousin," she told him; "if you don't choose to be obedient we shall condemn you to a couch in the library. Remember this is a special privilege and you must be grateful. Why Phil has even obtained permission for you to smoke."

"Has he, though?" exclaimed Eustace Lane, a flush of masculine satisfaction mounting to his wan cheeks; "that is good! I suppose I have some cigarettes, at least I had. when——"

The engineer stopped abruptly, thrust a hand into his bosom and brought out a flattish silver case, rounded to fit the curve of the owner's body. The metal was dented and scratched. Lane contemplated it with an odd expression on his thin features.

"A bit of luck this happened to be in my upper pocket," he observed drily. "Phil, may I trouble you for a match?"

His friend struck a vesta and held it. Eustace Lane drew a couple of deep breaths, enjoying the familiar flavour.

"Sit down; sit down!" he broke off to say; "you people must drop the habit of waiting on me—I won't have it."

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

Mrs. Mortimer snapped her fingers at him. "That for your 'won'ts'!" she cried, "you are not your own master yet, by any means. Well, I must go and give some orders. I suppose you will want a trifle of lunch about noon. Phil, you can stay and talk to him for ten minutes, and then he is to be left to his cigarettes and a book while the sun lasts. *Au revoir*, you rebellious invalid; I have to make sure that your fish is fresh and your chicken tender."

She flitted away and vanished through an open window. The two men glanced at one another, and Lane shut the silver receptacle with a click.

"Phil," he asked, between the puffs of the fragrant smoke; "how long is it exactly since——"

"Three weeks," said Mortimer, lighting up himself; "and if the bullet hadn't been clean it would have been longer, for it swerved off your case there and cut up your chest to some purpose. I had a most instructive glimpse of your fourth rib when the surgeons were dressing the wound—the groove torn by the bullet had bared the bone. How's your elbow, my hero of many tribulations?"

"As right as ever," answered the engineer, bending the joint referred to. "I conclude, with my laying in bed so much. By the bye, Phil, let me comprehend the public aspect of all this—where—where are the Calderons?".

"I—I've no precise knowledge," said his friend; "of course your getting hit was universally regarded as an accident. What you told me about the beggar could not be described as evidence, and it would have been the dickens of a job to prove that Calderon's foot didn't slip by chance—dash it, I wouldn't suspect him myself had you not recognised him for the fellow who cracked your elbow and shot your manager. But the authorities could hold no inquiry if you didn't succumb, unless an accusation were lodged against Calderon. And, on account of Miss Dulcie, I felt you'd rather I raised no fuss."

Eustace Lane put out an impulsive hand and grasped his companion's.

"You were quite correct," he murmured; "a thousand thanks, Phil."

The dissolving cloudlets stole silently from the lips of the smokers—both had relapsed into meditation. At length Mortimer spoke.

"Lane," he began, "perhaps you ought to be told something. Not that I believe it wise, but I can't be disloyal to you, even for your own sake. Miss—Miss Calderon has called every day during the last three

The marksman reached the centre of the stage, his shoe seemed to slide on the boards. He staggered, and the revolver was discharged.

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

weeks to ask, ostensibly on behalf of her grandfather, after your condition."

The engineer's cigarette fell to the floor of the verandah—he crushed the glowing tip and took another.

"Every day!" repeated Eustace Lane; "yet the fair must be over long ago."

"Yes," said Mortimer. "To be honest, I fear she walks a considerable distance. But she will reply to no questions, accept no refreshment, permit no sympathy. The nearest town is four miles off and boasts a low music-hall. Driving through it recently I noticed an advertisement of Calderon's performance—he is starring there."

Lane's mouth set and his eyes moistened.

"Phil," he muttered, "she—she—seems not to be indifferent to me."

"It may be a blind on her grandfather's part," urged Mortimer, with reluctance. "He could do no better if he wished to lend countenance to the view that his shot at you was accidental. Your recovery though, threatens his neck. You might, to be sure, keep his secret out of regard for Miss Dulcie, but he does not dream probably, that you are interested in her. On my honour, Eustace, I don't like the situation—it's too full of risk. That's what reconciled me to telling you of Miss Calderon's apparent devotion, and so increasing your fit of the tender passion. Either you must have Calderon arrested, or you must go back to South Africa."

"And leave Dulcie to the life of a strolling player," added Lane; "no, Phil, I'm not the sort. It is a bit of a puzzle, but I shall try to ferret out some less ignoble solution of the problem than flight."

Philip Mortimer consulted his watch; its verdict led him to start from his seat, draw a tall screen round the invalid's chair, push a bamboo table to the latter's side, and toss his match-box upon it.

"Well," he rejoined, "I'll allow you to tackle the enigma forthwith. I've a horse ill, worse luck, and the vet promised to run in about this time. Ta-ta, and don't be too chivalrous in your decision; you have evidently to deal with a ruffian as desperate as he is quick-witted."

Thus saying, Mortimer descended the verandah steps and strolled past the gable of the house towards the stables—a stalwart, cheerful, placid figure. The engineer looked after him.

"Dear old Phil," murmured Eustace Lane; "one of the best, the very best—where are those matches of his?"

A vesta spurted, the wisp of paper and tobacco—forgotten in the gravity of the just terminated conversation—was coaxed to a glow, and the convalescent puffed reflectively under the mellow radiance of the September sunshine.

His reverie was disturbed by a sudden sound, and he turned in his chair. The action hurt the newly-healed muscles of the engineer's chest, and he winced. The next instant a shock of surprise and delight had displaced the pain. Before him, on the path that stretched out to the garden entrance, stood Dulcie.

To the most casual observation she was fatigued and dusty—the slipping of a tired foot upon the gravel had served to indicate her presence, as the suppressed exclamation wrung from Lane by his rapid change of posture had aroused her to his.

Eustace Lane sprang up and advanced to the edge of the verandah. Reaching it, he staggered and clutched at the trellis for support. Dulcie darted across the lawn and mounted the wooden platform—his palm sought her shoulder, she was obliged to stoop under his weight. She caught at the seat he had abandoned, dragged it near, and helped him to sink into it.

There was ice-water on the table close by, Dulcie poured some out and extended the glass to him. Lane drank a mouthful as she held the vessel.

"It's—it's nothing," he gasped. "I've grown weak with confinement, that's all."

He took the glass and set it down, still holding her hand. "Dulcie," he said, "you have come miles. Don't deny it, there isn't a bus and you are exhibiting in Market Garston."

The girl leant on a pillar of the verandah, trembling.

"I—I had to," she faltered; "it would have been awful if he had killed you, I never knew him miss except then—he always told me he couldn't."

"So you are only here out of regard for him?" asked Eustace Lane coldly. "He may even have sent you."

"N—no," stammered Dulcie Calderon; "he—he doesn't suspect where I am. He has looked in the *Journal* every morning, though—there have been regular reports how you are. But I—I wanted to be certain."

The engineer clasped her small fingers, damp with perspiration. "And you have walked eight miles a day for three weeks to inquire," he murmured. "Dulcie, I wonder whether you would have regretted me much if I had died?"

Dulcie shuddered. "Don't, don't!" she pleaded; "I have dreamt about it! But you are better," she urged, falling on her knees beside him to scan his face; "you are really going to get well again, Mr. Lane."

"Of my wound, yes," admitted Eustace Lane, gravely; "but I have a serious type of heart disease, Dulcie. I am afraid that is incurable."

The listener blanched to her forehead.

"Oh," she whispered, "how terrible, how terrible!"

Lane studied her white features.

"It is not so very serious," he reassured her, smiling; "not at all dangerous, unless—unless I receive a great disappointment. Hearts in love do sometimes break, Dulcie, and it is love that is my heart complaint. You would not break my heart, would you, dear, if I were to ask you a momentous question and beg you not to say 'No'!"

Dulcie Calderon recoiled.

"Please don't!" she besought. "I'm not fit—I'm not a lady! I might have been if father hadn't been shot and granddad hadn't taken me. I wish you hadn't seen me, now, or at the fair—I do, indeed. Good-bye, Mr. Lane, I must go—I shouldn't have come."

"You are the one woman I shall ever wish to marry," declared the engineer, maintaining his grasp upon her; "I loved you in Johannesburg before the war. I went through it for your sake; I was going back to South Africa to find you again, and if I failed, to seek my quietus at the muzzle of a Boer rifle. Dulcie, you can't reject me just because you have shared your grandfather's mode of earning his bread."

The girl, still on her knees by the chair, resisted Eustace Lane's attempt to detain her; she was strangely pallid and resolute.

"You—you don't understand," she said; "it's as much as your life is worth to have anything to do with me. You will get yourself murdered."

Dulcie bent towards him shaking fearfully.

"Granddad hit you on purpose," she added. "I saw

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

it in his face—he was looking at you the whole of the time I danced. And after I heard him talking with Mr. Lomas—the man who shouted in front of the tent at the fair. I ought to tell you that they said, and will, though I wanted not to. They think you are dangerous in some way, and if you do not die of your wound they agreed that you should be murdered later on."

The Pistol King's granddaughter paused a moment—her self-control threatened to desert her.

"I don't know why," she continued, "but they hate you, especially Mr. Lomas. He—he is anxious to marry me, and granddad encourages him. Yet I won't, not if they kill me for it. Never mind me, Mr. Lane, you must get abroad at once, while you are safe."

Lane rose, lifting her to her feet.

"Poor child," he observed, "the Law will defend me and I will protect you. We will have Lomas gaoled and your grandfather shall meet with a worse fate. I recognised him that day as the murderer of Isaacson, the manager of the Bilboa Deep mine. He shall expiate that crime without adding another to it, as he endeavoured to do in order to annihilate my testimony—I having been the solitary witness of the deed."

Dulcie sprang off the shallow ledge of the veranda, horrified.

"No, no!" she protested; "you mustn't, you mustn't! You would have him hanged—it would be frightful. Father made me swear to stick to granddad and stand by him always, he isn't as bad as folks imagine. No, you must get abroad, that is best, and I will think of you all my life. Don't speak to me, I can't bear it!"

She put her hands to her ears and fled athwart the irregular grass plot to which she had descended. Lane followed her, but her hasty footsteps had already carried her through the distant gate into the road.

As she disappeared the foliage of a lofty oak by the garden rails began to rustle and quiver. The engineer perceived among its swaying branches a sullen visage and a stunted figure. They were those of the man he had seen proclaiming the Pistol King's ability at Steeple Garston Fair. Doubtless he had been spying upon the interview that had taken place between Eustace Lane and his colleague's granddaughter—the girl whom the former now knew that he coveted for his wife.

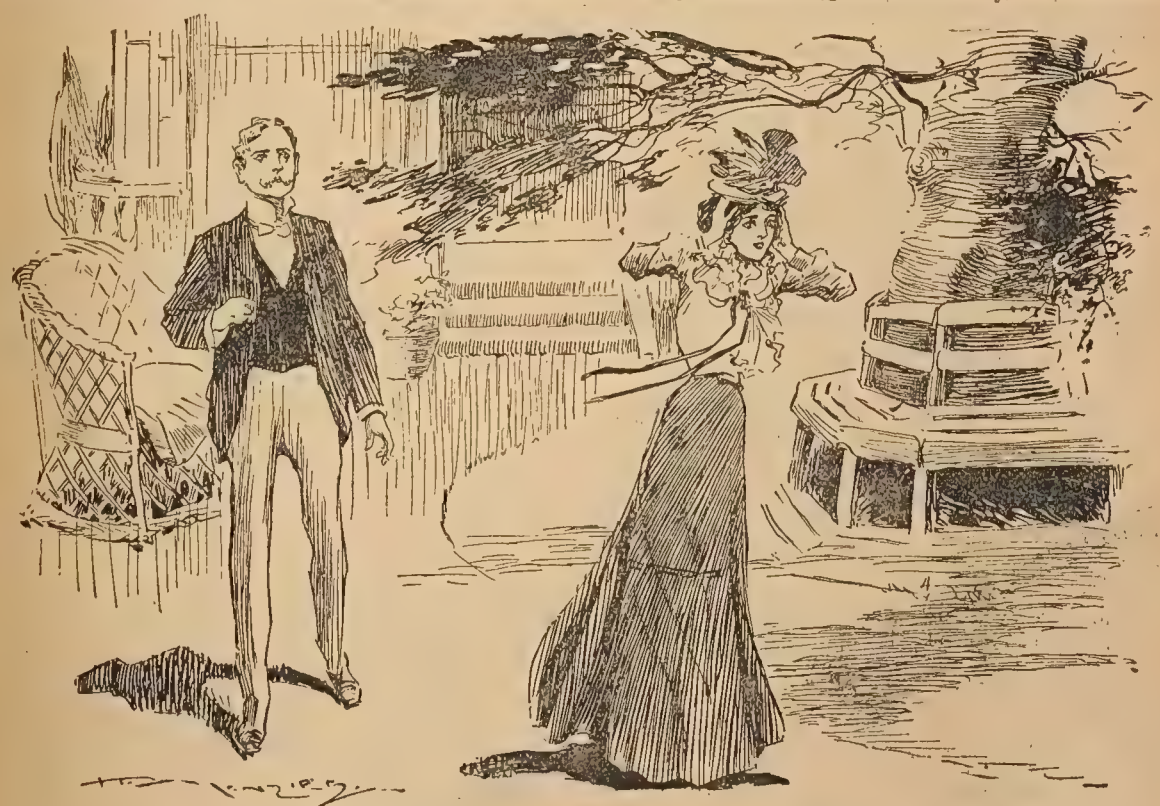
With a fierce effort Lane hurried down the path to the wicket by which Dulcie had made her departure. The walk was lengthy and he himself weak. He arrived at the exit to discover that both Miss Calderon and the presumed spy had vanished.

CHAPTER III.

"When Rogues Fall Out——"

"My good man, I don't want to witness his performance, I wish to learn where he lives! surely you know that much about him?"

Philip Mortimer fidgeted in a tawdry ante room at the



She put her hands to her ears and fled across the grass plot.

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

narrow window of a provincial box-office. He had stooped, the better to peer within.

"Sorry, sir," said the attendant, "but it's quite against our rule to give artists' addresses—you can see for yourself that it wouldn't be reasonable."

His interviewer put a hand on the brass money-plate of the window, fingers down. There was a faint click, when he lifted it, a half-sovereign lay upon the metal. With a smile and a casual gesture the other party to the discussion took up the coin.

"Thank you, sir," was the recipient's brief acknowledgment. "I mustn't do as you ask, all the same. But if you were to inquire of the first barman at the 'Rainbow'—over the road—he would tell you."

The amateur diplomatist nodded, and hastened out of the music-hall. A Ralli car waited at the kerb, and in it sat Eustace Lane, composed and upright, though very pale. His friend paused at the step.

"Dropped on a trail," he said; "another moment and we shall be running it down."

He traversed the mean thoroughfare and passed in at a wide entrance under a gaudy sign.

The engineer trifled with the reins and studied a neighbouring clock. It pointed to the second quarter after one—not much time had elapsed since that pathetic parting which had been so singularly spied upon.

At last Philip Mortimer emerged from the "Rainbow," to spring into the car and shake the cob to a trot.

"Got it!" he declared; "and now, my dear Eustace, if you'll try to keep cool, we will probe this affair to its depths. You are sure that the fellow you saw descend from the tree was the same you noticed at the fair?"

"Absolutely!" assented Lane; "they had had her tracked, therefore they suspected her. If they conclude, as they will, that Dulcie has been betraying them, who can say what will happen to her? I—I dare not guess."

"Nonsense!" objected Mortimer. "Calderon is her own kith and kin—he would not have her injured."

"Let us hope not," murmured the engineer, and the palm that rested on the edge of the car clasped and unclasped in the keen agony of his suspense.

They stopped in front of a dingy lodging-house at which they alighted, and in answer to their ring a female head peered at them above a balustrade at the back of the lobby.

"We wish to see Mr. Calderon," said Eustace Lane sharply.

"On your right," responded the owner of the head, which ducked out of sight without more ado.

Lane stepped forward, taking precedence of his friend, and turned a knob at his elbow. It gave access to a bedchamber, correctly if dingily furnished. On the opposite side were folding-doors, slightly ajar, and through which there penetrated the sound of voices.

Through a crack in the door they looked into the room, which contained a table at one side, covered by the remains of a meal. Near it lounged Calderon, stirring indolently a cup of tea, and behind him, trembling and alarmed, stood Dulcie.

In the centre of the room—his legs straddling and his hands on his hips, was planted the man whom Eustace and Mortimer had seen at the fair, and whom the former had detected in the act of spying upon himself and Dulcie.

"Granddaughter or no granddaughter," they heard him say, "she's a little traitor, and I'll have her made to smart for it. The hussy! I watched her cuddle and fuss over him as if he'd been a six months' baby. The fool wanted to marry her, and she told him she wasn't fit for him. Split on both of us, she did, and warned him to do a guy while there was time."

The Pistol King stroked his moustache and whistled softly; he was a massive figure, despite his years, and not without a certain ease and grace. He threw down his spoon and turned to the girl behind his chair.

"Dulcie," he said, "is Lomas right; do you—do you care for this Mr. Lane?"

"Care for him!" put in the other: "oughtn't I to be a good judge. You don't suppose I enjoyed her little flirtation, do you?"

"I spoke to my granddaughter, Job Lomas," retorted Calderon, coldly. "Have no fear, my child," he added; "hawks don't pick out hawk's eyes—if he be your lover he is secure from me. Why should I break your heart and risk my neck to no purpose? Tell me the truth, are you fond of Lane?"

A moment Dulcie struggled with her pride and maidenly reserve. Then she hid her face and burst into tears.

"I—I have always loved him," she sobbed.

"Don't you see, Lomas," said the Pistol King. "I acted hastily in potting this fellow—he would have kept silence for Dulcie's sake, he will keep it now. No one wants to drag his sweetheart's name through the mud of a public trial, with an execution for a relative of hers at the end of it."

Job Lomas uttered a howl like that of a wild beast.

"And where do I come in?" he snarled. "She protects you from your share in our bit of business at the Bilboa Deep and I lose her. You promised me I should have her if I would leave working on the cross and take to the show racket. Well, I've done it, and I'd peach on you and knife her before I'll give her up. So have your choice between settling Lane and chucking me."

By way of lending point to his ultimatum he pulled out a dagger-knife and opened it. Calderon rose leisurely from his chair, poised the mass of wood and upholstery on high, and dashed the weapon out of the bully's hand. Job Lomas flung himself on it, caught it up, and threw the steel blade—javelin fashion—into the Pistol King's face.

It passed upwards into the left pupil, and, with a groan, the marksman toppled to the floor as Lane and Mortimer dashed in to seize and pinion his antagonist.

When they lifted up the Pistol King his jaw was set in a horrible grin—the last expression that his handsome dissipated countenance would wear on earth.

* * * * *

Job Lomas was hanged by the public executioner in Market Garston gaol, after a trial that sorely puzzled the readers of the newspapers. But little evidence was required to convict him of murder, and Eustace Lane did his best to keep the memory of the Pistol King unsullied by the exposure which he had so richly deserved. For Dulcie Calderon was then the guest of Mrs. Philip Mortimer, and his betrothed. Besides, he could not help a feeling of tolerance for the rogue who had so calmly attempted his life in an inspiration of diabolical craftiness, and afterwards granted it as calmly to the tears of a woman

R. Norman Silver.

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

A RUINED INVENTION.

MR. BUGGE, who styled himself on his cards "Inventor," hurried from the backyard into the kitchen, where his wife was just washing up the dishes from breakfast.

"Where is that file?" he asked hurriedly of his wife, as he looked nervously in several directions.

"What file?" she asked, putting her arms akimbo and still holding the dish-cloth in her hand.

"Why, the file I was using a couple of days ago and hid down here somewhere. If I can get that coupling made a little stronger this thing is going to work and then Hooray! Farewell to poverty!"

His wife looked steadily at him and the suspicion of a sneer was on her face. Then she threw the dish-cloth on the table, and began as follows:

"Look here, Bugge, I'm getting pretty well tired out with this silly nonsense. You call yourself an inventor, and what in the world have you ever invented, I'd like to know? You run round the house like something crazy and look wild-eyed enough to be put in a cage, and yet there is never a farthing coming from any your 'inventions,' and, for my part, I declare I think I've married a maniac." This last remark was accompanied by a stamp of the foot.

"Oh! now, come, dear," said the busy Mr. Bugge; "don't talk like that. You know that I'm working hard on this machine, and you must realise that I've got too much sense to get to work on a thing unless there is big money in it. Now, let me describe it to you. Here is a locomotive in these days going along at comparatively a snail's pace, puffing and blowing, throwing out cinders and smoke, endangering the crops in its path and ruining the clothes of the passengers it is drawing.

"Now look at my liquid air locomotive with its millions of horsepower, its unlimited speed, its absolute cleanliness and its minimum of danger. Just think of speeding along at the rate of 600 miles an hour instead of sixty. Then, my dear, but painfully obtuse Mrs. Bugge, think of the day when your dear husband, whom you now so cruelly characterise as a maniac, becomes chairman of the Liquid Air Transportation and Railroad Company. Think of the magnificent private car in which we will tour this great and beautiful land! Let yourself be wafted mentally into the luxurious and palatial private offices which will be erected for my sole occupancy. Think——"

The front door bell rang, and the wife hastened to see who was at the door. She returned in a moment, with a slip of paper in her hand and a gleam of triumph in her eye.

"Look here!" she said, coming up close to Mr. Bugge, and holding the paper before his eyes, "look at that bill from the grocer's, and we can't get another thing until it is paid! Look at it!—look at it, will you, and then tell me about your gorgeous offices and your private car. You had better get into somebody else's private office and push a pen for awhile, even if it's only a pound a week you make, instead of depending on the poor little bit that I have to feed you and keep you throwing away your time on such drivelling foolishness as you've just been telling me about. Now, if you want any dinner you drop that lot of trash out there and get your other things on. Then you march yourself down to the centre of the city and look up some of the situations that are advertised in the morning paper.

"That child," continued Mrs. Bugge, warming up to the subject, "wants a new pair of shoes, and its poor little feet are on the ground. And yet, there you stand and trifle away your time. You never think of doing a hand's turn that would bring you in a few shillings."

"But, my dear," began the inventor, when he was interrupted by his wife.

"No, I am not your dear, unless it's your dear slave, who works her hands off for you and who scrubs and cleans and mends to keep the things from falling apart. Don't talk to me—I'm a slave, that's what I am."

"But, Mrs. Bugge," remonstrated the inventor in a tender tone, "just have a little more patience. I know you have a great burden on your shoulders with these household duties, and I know that you are rarely able to get out of the house; but just wait and some of these fine days—only a little while away now—I'll be able to give you the finest of dresses, the most expensive of bonnets; you shall ride in your own carriage, and the little one will have a dozen pairs of shoes if necessary."

"I wish I could believe you," said the wife doubtingly. "Well, I might just as well keep it up a little longer, but I feel in my bones that your wasting you're time, and that all this is foolishness."

"Indeed, it's not foolishness."

"I say it is," said Mrs. Bugge, getting back to her original temper rapidly; "and I won't stand it. You've got to go to work, and that mighty quick."

"But let me finish my liquid air engine," protested Mr. Bugge, meekly.

"Let you finish it!" shouted Mrs. Bugge, loudly. "I'm the one to do that. I'm tired of all this foolishness and nonsense, and now you've got to go to work. Watch me while I finish your liquid air engine, or whatever it is."

So saying, Mrs. Bugge went to the coal-hole and secured the hammer. Then she rushed into the old stable that her husband used as his workroom. There on the floor stood the invention, nearly all put together. Mrs. Bugge raised the hammer and let it fall, while her husband tremblingly watched her through the half-open door. One blow broke through a bar of metal and caused the top to fall off, and the second rap threw bits of the liquid air engine in every direction. As she struck the last blow and completed the wreck, she turned and saw her husband, but as he was no match for her at any time, and certainly not when she had a hammer in her hand, he fled.

"You'd better run!" she called after him. Mr. Bugge redoubled his pace.

"Don't you come back here till you've got a job!" was the last thing the inventor heard as he scaled the front railing of the house.

F. H. T.

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

DEAD TO THE WORLD

By Henry T. Johnson.

Author of "Cruce Vincit," "The Pride of the Ring," etc., etc.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

RICHARD SELDON (Tiger Dick), an escaped convict who murders and then impersonates Cyril Roylance, of Fallowfield Hall.
HARCOURT DALE, a near neighbour of Roylance.
DORIS DALE, his daughter.
JACK BRANSCOMBE, a young farmer, in love with Doris.
INSPECTOR ROSSITER, a detective from Scotland Yard.
REV. GERALD HASTIE, curate of Fallowfield.
JAMES and JOSEPH NUBBLEY, two brothers living in a cottage near the school at Fallowfield; they are known to Seldon.
MISS MORRISON, the schoolmistress.

THE THREAD OF THE STORY.

Seldon, aided by two friends, also ex-convicts, murders Barker, the Dale's butler, but the guilt of his death is fixed by circumstantial evidence on Jack Branscombe. He then organises a series of robberies at the principal houses in the neighbourhood of Fallowfield Hall. Branscombe is hidden by Doris in a secret chamber at Dalehurst Grange.

CHAPTER XVII. (*continued.*)

"I KNOW—I know, I've thought of all that," said Doris. "What, what else is to be done, what alternative is there other than rushing headlong into the trap, into that trap whose jaws are set with prison locks and prison bars?"

"Too true," replied Gerald Hastie, "and we must think it out. But there's one thing certain, you mustn't run the risk you've taken any longer."

"But who else is there to dare anything for him but I, who love him? All his friends have turned against him."

"No, not all, I haven't."

"But what can you do, Gerry?"

"I think I can face danger as well as a girl. The harboring of suspected criminals is not quite in my line, but the charity that thinketh no evil is, and I cannot, will not, think evil of Jack Branscombe. So this is my plan, Doris. You must see to-night that the coast is clear, and just about midnight Jack must get away from the Grange and make his way across the fields to my cottage. I'll be his custodian, there'll be less danger, and what danger there is will be faced by a man instead of by a girl."

"Oh, Gerry, Gerry, you're arguing just as he argued. It makes him mad to think of me running the risk; he wants to go straight out into the world and face it. I wouldn't hear of his plan, but I will listen to yours, because I think there's safety in it."

"And now, Doris, put me down. My way lies towards yonder cottages. By Jove! Doris, I always knew you were a brick; now, my girl, I know you for a heroine."

He alighted from the basket chaise and made his way down a side lane on a visit to some cottages. And, Doris, waking her pony into a trot, proceeded along the hedgelined lane. And from the further side of one of those hedgerows a man, whose crouched form had been silently stealing along level with that pony chaise, stood still, and, pushing aside his tweed cap, scratched his head.

"Eh! but this is a rum start," soliloquised Ned Fletcher. "Dang me, there's a bit o' sport in this. Man alive! I've been used to a bit of hidin' mysen in bracken, and in ditches, and in boughs. I've been in hidin' for my liberty, but never for my life. I'll not give the game away, twouldna be sport to do so, but dang me! if I don't tell the squire—'twill amuse him."

CHAPTER XVIII.

"MR. ROSSITER RECEIVES A MESSAGE."

THANKS, possibly, to that abnormal thickness of skull with which his intimates generously credited him, Morgan Chandler, some sixteen hours after the receipt of those two merciless head blows, was in a fair way of recovering from them. He had regained consciousness for some hours, and the doctor had scouted any apprehension of brain trouble, he also alleging the disproportionate density of the casket in relation to what it con-

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

tained. The first to hint at such trouble was Chandler's master, and what suggested it to him was the injured man's persistency that Jack Branscombe was his assailant, whereas, as a matter of fact, his master knew better. Further questioned as to the identity of the other of his assailants, Morgan Chandler mysteriously hinted that it was someone who owed him a grudge, someone whose line of business led him to be abroad o' nights. No, he would name no names at present, but there would come a time when Squire would see how he had been misled and the sort of party he'd put his trust in."

"Very well, Chandler," said the Squire, "keep quiet and don't worry, and when you're quite well you and I will have a long field day on the estate accounts."

And then Chandler hastily and emphatically clapped his hands to his head and vowed that he was suffering from concussion of the brain, and that it would be days, perhaps weeks, before he was able to bring his mind to figures.

"And how long, Squire, do you think 'twill be before they collar that murdering young villain?"

"I can't say, Chandler, but you must make haste and get well so that you can give evidence against him."

"Ah, I'd like to be doing that," said Chandler; and the Squire, leaving the sick man's room, hummed softly to himself:

"Not the least doubt of it, Mr. Chandler; you'd like to see him in the dock and give evidence against him to avert the possibility of his doing so against you," and going direct to his land steward's office in the eastern wing he once again went through various ledgers and day books and compared the accounts posted with the vouchers on various files.

"You've been playing a tall game, Mr. Chandler, and for pretty big stakes! I wonder you haven't feathered your nest better. I wonder what you have done with all the money. It hasn't gone on the gee-gees, no, nor the cards—that sort of investment's too solid for you, my friend; these bundles of correspondence point to riskier gambling. The bucket shopkeeper, not the 'booky,' has benefited by your picking and stealing. You've dabbled in differences instead of S.P., but they're very much alike underneath, the grain runs very much the same only there's some variety in the veneer."

Foraging through account books, invoices, vouchers, and schedules, he came again and again upon discrepancies, suspicious erasures, and other evidences pointing unmistakably to fraud and embezzlement on a huge and systematic scale.

"I've got him set," he muttered. "There's enough here to clap the handcuffs on him, and yet, though I must get rid of him, that isn't the wisest way. I've been quite close enough in touch with magistrates, detectives, and constables of late, too close for my liking, too close to be safe; the fox may sometimes be safe close to the kennels, but he doesn't talk to the hounds. No, Richard, you must clear this fellow out, but not that way."

"Mr. Rossiter, sir," said the servant.

"Oh, yes, I'd almost forgotten," and he hastened to the handsome reception hall, glorious with skin rugs, mammoth vases, antlers' horns, spears, battle axes, and other trophies of sport and battle, and greeted his guest cordially, like, as that guest remarked later on, "one of the right sort."

"And real swell as he is," Mr. Rossiter declared next morning, "he made me feel just as comfortable and at home as if we'd been pals all our lives. And, my! he knows how to put a dinner on. Yes, he can do himself very well, Mr. Cyril Roylance can, if he has lived the best part of his life up country in Australia. Ah! that port of his! It'll always be one of my most exquisite memories!"

"Well, any news?" said the Squire, tucking his serviette inside his collar, preparatory to attacking the turtle soup.

"Well nothing particular at present, sir; at least, nothing I can say much about."

For it was Mr. Rossiter's way to be mysteriously reticent—when he had nothing to report.

"Try a little milk punch," said the host, and the guest complied without a murmur.

"What do you make of Chandler's story?" inquired the host.

"Simply confirms what I've said all along," replied the guest, "young Branscombe's in it."

"But he's the last fellow in the world one would have thought so desperate. You'll try the *suprême de sole à la Morney?*" Then to the servant, "The Hochheimer to Mr. Rossiter."

"Well, you know, sir, in my line of business it ain't so extraordinary perhaps to meet with people that lead double lives as it would be in yours. Excuse me making the remark, Mr. Roylance, but this hock is a wine; I'm very partial to a hock."

"You're naturally a good judge. A keen brain and a keen palate very often go together, Mr. Rossiter. So you credit Chandler's story, and you don't think the shock of the affair has at all unhinged him?"

"I'm certain that Jack Branscombe was in your house last night, I'm certain he's hiding somewhere in this district. I can't say I've got a tangible clue yet, but I think I'm getting warm. He's a desperate villain. I don't despair of clapping the bracelets on him yet."

"Here's to your success," said the other. "Here come the capons, and, take my advice, try a glass of champagne over a slice of this York ham. What line did you say you were going on?"

"It's really a pleasure to talk to you, Mr. Roylance, you're so appreciative. Well, I'm going on this. It's pretty clear one of Branscombe's gang means giving him away."

A servant entered, handed the Squire a slip of paper. He glanced at the name, and said:

"I will be down in a moment." Then to his guest: "I say, Rossiter, you won't mind excusing me for just a few minutes, one of my hands wants to see me on an urgent estate matter?"

"By all means, Mr. Roylance. I like it all the better you not standing on ceremony with me, puts me more at ease, sir, having regard to our respective positions: and business is business, sir, and has to be attended to whether it's my business or your business."

"You're a very kind and sensible fellow as well as a clever one, and, remember, the wine's with you."

Mr. Rossiter, settling himself down again into his seat as the door closed behind his host, beamed as one at peace with all the world, and, smacking his lips, remarked:

"Mr. Roylance, you're right, the wine is with me, likewise, I'm with the wine."

"Now, Fletcher, what's this mysterious message?" said the Squire, walking into the little ante-room of the library which he used as a sanctum. "You surely haven't brought me down from my dinner table on a trifling matter?"

"No fear, Squire," said the other. "I think thee'll say so when I've done."

"Well, cut it short; cut the cackle and get to the horses."

"Which it weren't a horse, Squire, it were a pony."

"Oh, rats! Mine's only a figure of speech. You haven't come to me at my dinner time to bother me about people's ponies. Come, man, the yarn."

"I was saying, sir, it were a pony."

"Oh!"

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

"Miss Dale's pony."

"Whew! What?"

"Her was driving it in the chaise along the road; t'young apprentice parson chap were walking along; ho'd come from the school-house, they say he be courtin' the mistress."

Another whistle from the Squire of Fallowfield.

"Miss Doris asked him to take a seat aside her, and I trudges along t'other side o' the hedge; 'tis a way I've got, you know, Squire, born of my business, of trudgin' along under the lee of a hedge with my head down and my feet never crackin' a twig."

"Very useful habit, Fletcher, for keepers—or people who are keeping out of the way of keepers."

"Eh! t'Squire, 'ee will have his joke. I'll admit I've found useful as a keeper what I learnt afore I was a keeper. And as they talked I listened."

"And what did you learn?"

"I larnt where young Mr. Branscombe's a hidin'."

"You did! Tell me. The reward shall be yours if he's nailed."

"I weren't thinkin' about the reward, Squire, somehow reward don't come into my mind when it's a question o' servin' you, as kept me from bein' turned out on the roadside and give me honest work."

There was a strange look in the Squire of Fallowfield's face.

"By Gad!" he whispered, "if this man knew to whom he was talking! Knew me for what I am! Perhaps if I'd met more like him in other days I might have been different."

"I was thinkin', Squire, of you and young Branscombe fightin' it out for the same lady, beggin' pardon for makin' so bold, and like the mouse that helped the lion I thought I'd jump at the chance o' helpin' the gentleman that helped me. He's hidin' somewhere in Dalehurst Grange."

"Dalehurst Grange! Impossible, man!"

"Nay, sir; 'tis a queer old place, the Grange. Parties comes down from Lunnon at times to paint it and photygraph it. It's been writ about in books and in history. There's been strange things done theer in bygone times, duels fought, aye! and, years ago, I've heerd say one lot of soldiers stormed it and fought right well with another lot as held it. 'Tis honeycombed with underground passages, and they say there's strange recesses in some of the galleries, hid with sliding panels. Anyway, with her own lips I heard Miss Dale tell the parson's apprentice she had Branscombe in hiding there, and I heard him and her arrange he was to leave there at midnight by the lych gate in what they call Lone Lad's Lane, and make his way 'cross country to where the parson's apprentice lodges," and Ned Fletcher told to his now by no means impatient listener all that he

What was that white patch on the sanded red tiles?

Digitized by Google

had heard in the ambush of the hedgerow; then prepared to depart, when the other stopped him, and, seating himself at a table, took up a pen and a sheet of notepaper. Then he paused.

"No, it won't do to write on this heading, nor yet on a water mark that he can recognise," he muttered. Then he rummaged in his waste paper basket, picked out a circular, tore off the clean sheet, scribbled a few lines, and folded it into slip note form.

"Now, Fletcher," he said, "here's a sovereign for what you've done, and here's a sovereign for what you've got to do. Take this to Stonecrop Cottage, where Detective Inspector Rossiter lodges, and slip it under the door."

"But, Squire, they told me as Mr. Rossiter were here."

"Don't you know," the other exclaimed, with that black scowl for which Fletcher had so wholesome a respect settling on his face, "that I employ you to carry out my orders, not to question them."

"Beg pardon, sir," and Fletcher, with a tug at his forelock, departed to obey the bidding of the one man in the world for whom he cared two straws.

It was a beautiful moonlight night: indeed, at times it seemed to Detective Inspector Rossiter, as he spun along in the Squire's dogcart on his homeward way, that two moons or even more were shining.

"By George!" he soliloquised. "I've enjoyed my evening. Talk aboura a host! Talk aboura dinner! That sherry with the hors d'œuvres! And that Beaune! and the champagne too," and he gently carolled:

"Glorious drink is good champagne."

"But of all the wines in the world that port of his! And there a case of it gone up to my little digs. in town, that will make 'em open their eyes, some of 'em." Then gravely: "I say, coachman, you bear this in mind, you're a younger man than I am, and you may think of my words in years to come when I'm away, p'raps, far, far away; you've got a real good guv'nor, as good as they make 'em, and don't you forget it, and don't you ever leave him. Hullo, here we are, Cronestop Cottage, I mean to say Sonecrops Scottage. What do you mean, mind the step?"

"I only mean, sir, it's a bit of a way down from the cart, and it's a very little 'un. No offence, sir."

"Course not! Good night, coachman. Here's half-a-crown, and mind what I told you. Good night—mind the step indeed!" he muttered as he felt his way by the palings to the cottage door, took out his latch-key, and entered.

What was that white patch on the sanded red tiles? He picked it up and took it into the little sitting room and placed it beside the lamp, open and perused it, then swiftly he tore off his coat, waistcoat, collar, and necktie, rushed into his bedroom, filled the tin bath, plunged head and shoulders into it, rubbed himself dry quickly and vigorously.

"By George! if I'd only kept the cart waiting! No, perhaps it would be best afoot. He took from a cabinet a small phial, poured three drops into a tumbler of water, which clouded and curdled in an instant, drank it off at a draught, and in a moment was a sober man. Once again he perused these lines:

"Watch for Jack Branscombe along Lone Lads Lane from twelve to half-past, midnight."

"I've just got time to get there if I start now, but if I wait to get assistance I may miss him. I'll go now, I'll tackle him single-handed. I never saw the man yet I couldn't—except Dick Seldon, and he's dead. I knew—I knew there was a split in the camp, and that split in their camp is going to win me the battle."

CHAPTER XIX.

A Chase—And a Check!

Once again he went out into the moonlight and made his way by devious ways towards Dalehurst. At last he

REMINISCENCES OF THE CRIMEAN WAR,

Mr. Samuel Olsen, of 500 Slade Road, Stockland Green, Erdington, near Birmingham, has now reached the advanced age of 69 years. He can remember well the Crimean War, and has many very interesting reminiscences of that period, but he cannot remember any intervening time when he could say he was in good health, or even that he felt well, until Chas. Forde's Bile Beans for Biliousness restored his long lost health. Speaking the other day to a *Birmingham Telegram* reporter, Mr. Olsen said:—"For the past 38 years I have suffered from constipation, and during that time have never known what it was to feel well. I could scarcely eat my food, and never had any relish for it. Then I continually had headaches, while the pains in my side and stomach were almost unbearable. At times I got very low and despondent, feeling my life to be a perfect misery. I tried a number of doctors, and took all sorts of patent medicines, but neither doctors nor medicines ever did me any permanent good until I tried Chas. Forde's Bile Beans for Biliousness. I saw them advertised in the papers and decided to give them a trial. Almost immediately after beginning with them I felt a little better. That made me hopeful and I persevered with them, with the result that I can now eat my food with relish, and am better in every way. I used to always feel tired at night and thoroughly exhausted in the morning. In fact, I cannot remember the day when I did not come home and have to go to sleep. Now I can get up at five o'clock in the morning, and feel fresh and well throughout the whole day. Formerly I could scarcely walk from Newhall Street to John Bright Street (about half a mile). Last Monday I was out walking for three hours and a half and did not feel any the worse for it. I am recommending Bile Beans to all my friends. My wife has also taken them for indigestion and spasms, and has received great benefit from them."

Without doubt constipation is the source of manifold ailments. For this disorder, for blood impurities, pimples, and face sores—which are often a direct result of it—for indigestion, anæmia, liver and kidney disorders, headache, colds, chill, debility, nervousness, female ailments, pains in the chest, buzzing in the head, rheumatism, and as a restorative after influenza, Chas. Forde's Bile Beans for Biliousness are unequalled. All chemists stock them, or you may obtain direct from the Bile Bean Manufacturing Co., 119 and 120 London Wall, London, E.C., by sending prices, one and three halfpence or two and ninepence per box. Bile Beans are sold only in sealed boxes; never loose.

DRUNKENNESS

CURED. This can be done with or without patient's knowledge. Send me a stamp and I will tell you how. (Send no money.) Address, in confidence, Mrs. C. H. (Room 8), 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

ESTABLISHED 1851.

BIRKBECK BANK,

Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane, London.

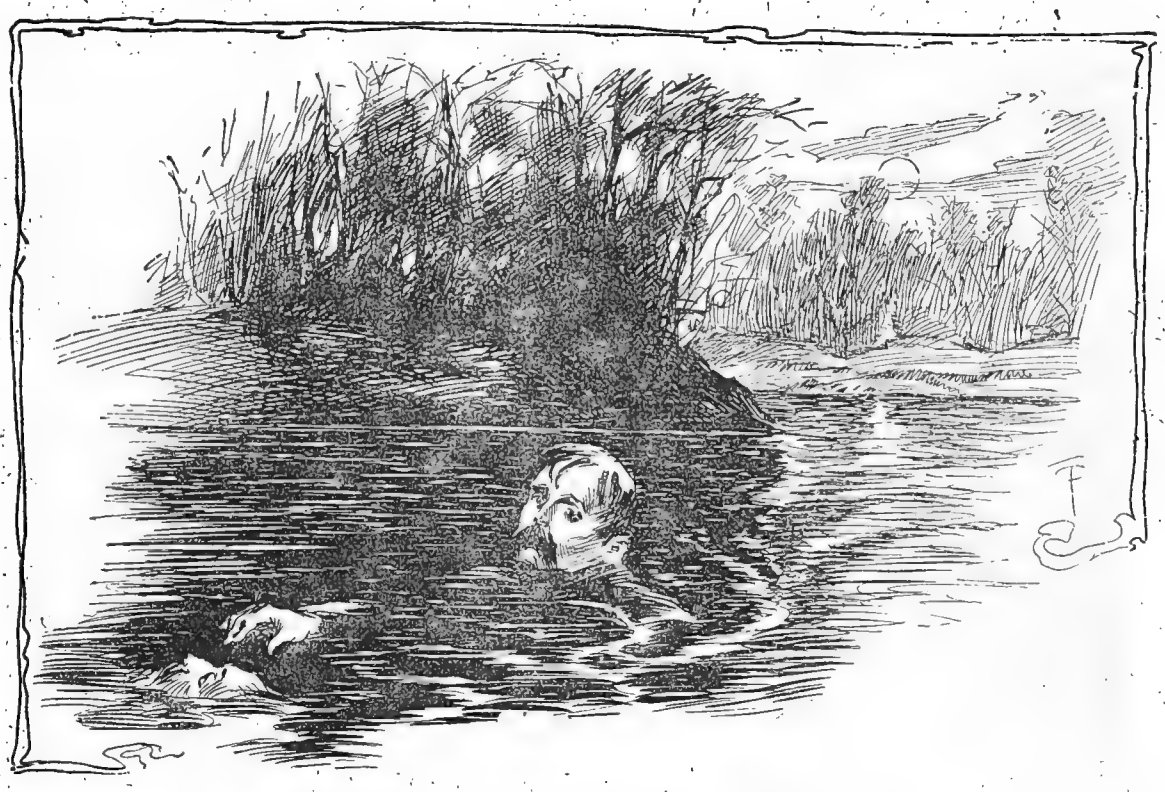
2½% DEPOSIT ACCOUNTS repayable on demand. 2½%

The Birkbeck Almanack, with full particulars, post free

FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, *Manager.*

reached a fir plantation bordering upon Lone Lads Lane and crept through it in spite of undergrowth and bracken, till, somewhat scratched and torn, he reached the five-barred gate leading to the road.

"To think I should have been away from the cottage to-night," he soliloquised, "of all nights in the year. Oh! I'd have given anything, I'd have missed anything, even the Squire's port, to have been at my place when that letter came. If I'd only heard a footstep along the garden, heard it being pushed under the door, I might have had two birds, and now"—he looked at his watch, "I shall have to be smart or I may not secure even one."



A few swift strokes, and just as that mass was sinking 'neath the tide he caught it.

At last he emerged out of the inky darkness of the trees and undergrowth into a clearing, and, beyond a small patch of sward, there was a five-barred gate leading into Lone Lads Lane. His heart gave a great leap, he was just in time, for there in the moonlight he saw stealing along close to the opposite bank of the road a crouching form, clad in a closely-buttoned ulster and a peak cap, pulled close down, hid his features; whoever it might be, whether it was Jack Branscombe or not, it was undoubtedly the form of the man whose description had been sent from Mattingham—it was the man he wanted. Taking a swift run, he vaulted the five-barred gate, sprang into the road, and shouted:

"Stop! I command you to stop. You are John Brauscombe, and you are my prisoner!"

He made a rush towards his quarry, sprang upon him, and the man he challenged, turning swiftly round to face him, they closed.

"You are my prisoner," he repeated.

"Not yet!" exclaimed the other, and as they swung round in their struggle the light fell on the other man's face, and Rossiter, recognising the features, knew that it was indeed John Branscombe that he held.

"I tell you again, you've got to come with me."

"No, no!" the other replied. "If I come with you you've to take me. Let me go—I tell you I'm innocent, I swear I am innocent, and I will not be taken. I'll prove my innocence first, then I'll surrender."

"You'll surrender now. Cease struggling, I mean to take you!"

"No, I tell you I'll not be taken alive."

"Then, by heaven! I'll take you dead!"

The grips loosened from each other's biceps, each pressing forward, their hands met and locked behind each other's shoulders, and swiftly, suddenly, Jack Branscombe swung his would-be captor from his feet, swirled him round, doubled himself as it were beneath him, and, with a swing, sent him over his shoulders, and Rossiter crashed with all his weight into the road, while the man who had escaped him set off at full speed.

But Rossiter was a brave man and, scrambling to his feet, he set off after the other, followed him along the lane, through the gap in the hedge, across the grass

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

PERSONAL MAGNETISM

WILL POWER
NERVE FORCE
STAMINA

Call it what you will —

is the intangible power that controls human destiny. It is the key to all business and social success. If you come in contact with people, you cannot afford to be without this knowledge. It will give you an inestimable advantage over others. We guarantee it, or forfeit $1,000.00 in gold.

By our new system you can learn in a few days at your own home. Our beautifully illustrated free treatise tells you all about it. Distinguished clergymen, physicians and public men all over the country are studying this wonderful science, and achieving increased success. Following are the names and addresses of a few highly successful graduates of our Institute

Rev. PAUL WELLER, Box 200, Gorman, N. Y.; G. S. LINCOLN, No. 101 Crutchfield Street, Dallas, Tex.; Rev. J. C. QUINN, D. D., Ph. D., Winn, Me.

We have thousands of letters of highest commendation, many of which are published in our free book. Do not send money, the book is free. A penny postal card will bring it.

NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE,
Dept. V.A. 5 N.Y., U.S.A.

"WORTH A GUINEA A BOX."

BEECHAM'S PILLS

FOR ALL

BILIOUS & NERVOUS DISORDERS,
Sick Headache, Constipation, Wind and Pains in Stomach, Impaired Digestion, Disordered Liver, and Female Ailments.

SALE OVER SIX MILLION BOXES YEARLY.

In Boxes, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. each, with full directions.

Prepared only by the Proprietor,

THOMAS BEECHAM, St. Helens, Lancashire.

Sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere.

AT THE TOP 25/-

THE HIGHEST POINT OF PERFECTION AS YET ATTAINED BY ANY WATCH AT THE PRICE.

H. SAMUEL'S CELEBRATED "ACME" SILVER LEVER WATCH

AS ILLUSTRATED.

SPECIFICATION.
SOLID STERLING SILVER CASES, FINE 3 PLATE JEWELLED MOVEMENT, FITTED WITH DUST AND DAMP PROOF CAP, AND H. SAMUEL'S LATEST IMPROVEMENTS, BY ROYAL LETTERS PATENT. NOT TO BE FOUND IN WATCHES OF ANY OTHER MAKE.

25/-

Sent free by return on receipt of P.O.O. 25s., together with key, written instructions, and H. SAMUEL'S VALUABLE FREE BONUS GIFT.

WARRANTED FOR 7 YEARS.
ONE MONTH'S FREE TRIAL.

ONE OF THOUSANDS

Every post brings a further batch of similar letters of praise.

Moss Side Cottage,
Upper Skelmorlie,
Sept. 4, 1901. Wemyss Bay.

Mr. H. SAMUEL,

I RECEIVED YOUR WATCH ALL RIGHT. I AM EMPLOYED ON THE RAILWAY, AND YOU MAY BE SURE IT HAS HAD A SEVERE TEST, AS MY DUTIES NECESSITATE JUMPING ON AND OFF TRAINS.

YOU CAN USE THIS TESTIMONIAL AS YOU THINK FIT, AND I WILL BE QUITE WILLING TO ANSWER ALL LETTERS OR COMMUNICATIONS RESPECTING THE MERITS OF YOUR WATCH. Yours truly,
(Signed W.W. CAMPBELL

Send a Post-card To-day for

H. SAMUEL'S GRAND PRIZE BOOK.

SPLENDID NEW EDITION JUST OUT.

Bursting with Astounding Bargains in Watches, Clocks, Rings, Chains, Brooches, Bracelets, etc. Cutlery, Plate, Silverware, Fancy Goods, etc. 218 pages embellished by over 3,000 Superb Engravings and Illustrations. This Beautiful Volume demands conspicuous place in every home, and apart from its handsome appearance, shows how by dealing DIRECT you can effect a SAVING of nearly ONE HALF.

FREE TO ALL!
BONUS GIFTS TO ALL BUYERS
WRITE TO-DAY.

H. SAMUEL
(Dept. 29),
MARKET ST., MANCHESTER

meadows, and, breathless as he was, a great shout escaped him, a shout of exultation. Yes! he had him now, there in the moonlight, just as he reached the top of the swell in the meadow, he beheld the gleaming of the silver ribbon of river right ahead of his quarry. Surely that would stop him, for the channel was deep and the current notoriously swift and strong.

Jack Branscombe pressed on and on, reached the sedgy margin of the swirling waters, there was a splash, and he had disappeared beneath them and presently had come up again to the surface and was striking out with all his strength for the opposite bank.

But Rossiter, racing up, was not to be denied. He too plunged into the ice-cold racing stream. He too struck out, and by the time the man he chased had reached the opposite bank he had reached the centre. And then, suddenly, a cry escaped him as he felt the icy chill strike upon his heart and brain, as well as on his limbs like a knife! Cramp, like iron shackles, held his bent elbows to his side. He spun round in the swirling torrent, and his face gleamed white and deathly in the cold, blue moonlight as, ceasing swimming, he was born along by that fierce, full-flowing tide.

Jack Branscombe, hearing that cry, paused half-way up the bank and looked back at his pursuer, listened to his despairing cry. "He's done—he's drowning," he muttered. "And he's a man, he's threatened my liberty, striving to drag me to an unjust doom; but he was only doing his duty, he doesn't know, but God knows all, and in God's sight I shall be indeed a murderer if I speed hence and let him die!"

And, brave, true man as he was, forgetting all except that his fellow man was vainly struggling there in peril, he rushed along the bank till he had overtaken that helpless form born by the rushing stream, then plunged in. A few swift strokes, and just as that mass was sinking 'neath the tide, he caught it, clutched the drowning man, lifted his face above the waters, and now pushing, now dragging, striking now with this arm, now with that, but always with those legs of iron muscles, he got him to the side, dragged him out, sat him on the bank, undid his collar, and taking a flask from his pocket put it to his lips.

A little while and Rossiter's eyes opened; a big shiver ran through his frame.

"It's you—you who saved me?" he murmured. "You, I was trying to drag to prison, perhaps to the gallows."

"Yes, I saved you. I swam back and risked being taken because I wouldn't let you drown. Listen, man, you were only doing your duty, but man to man, do you think that the man who did what I did could be a murderer?"

"By heaven, I can't think it!"

"Or a liar?"

"Too big a man to be a liar."

"Well, then I'll tell you. I, who have risked what I have to save you, I tell you on my word of honour I am innocent."

"Yes, yes, but innocent or not, get you gone—get you gone before my strength comes back. Oh, man! get clear away; duty's duty, but heaven send it mayn't be mine to clap the irons on those strong wrists that held me above that ice-cold cruel tide."

And with a gulp in his voice he watched the man he had pursued plunge once again into those black and swirling waters, watched him with strained eyes clamber out on the other side, then, turning round, he threw himself full length in the grass, hiding his face in his folded arms.

"No, no!" he murmured. "I'm done—I'm done—I'm too dead beat to follow, too dead beat to even watch which way he goes."

(To be continued.)

HIS REVENGE.

"Ha! you refuse me, do you, Miss Hamtagg?"

"I do, Mr. McStab," said the young lady, coldly.

"Then listen to me, Rachel Plickergy Hamtagg!" he hissed. "I swear you shall bitterly repent it!"

Wild whistled the bleak wind. Dismally moaned the huge elm tree that rasped and scratched itself against the cruel edges of the tiles on the cornice, and gruesomely groaned Algernon Fitz-Thompson MacStab, as he stole forth in the dead of night to the ancestral smoke-house in the back yard.

"I'll show her!" he muttered between his teeth.

From beneath his coat he drew a compact bundle of letters, cut the string that bound them together, struck a match, made a bonfire of the collection, and watched them slowly consume to ashes.

He was burning letters written in happier days to Rachel Hamtagg. She had returned them to him.

* * * * *

"This is so sudden," said the widow, blushingly, "and so unexpected. I—I thought your visits to our house were for the purpose of seeing my daughter."

"She is too young," replied the visitor decidedly. "I told her so last evening. We parted in a friendly spirit but I gave her to understand as delicately as I could that I should not call to see her any more. This is sudden, it is true, but I trust none the less agreeable. May I not venture to hope?"

"Why, sir, I——"

"And now, my dear," he said, at the expiration of a happy half-hour, as he gently lifted her head from his shoulder, "I should like to see your—or perhaps I ought now to say our—daughter, to tell her of this happy event."

"Shall I call her?"

"If you please, my dear."

"Rachel," said Algernon Fitz-Thompson McStab, pleasantly, "you will be glad to know, I dare say, that I am to be your father. You may go, Rachel. Please close the door, my child, as you go out."

He: "Do you like animals?" She: "Would you feel flattered if I said yes?"

Mr. Jones: "Madame, let me tell you that facts are stubborn things." "What a fact you must be," replied his wife.

"You say that you saw that chicken killed?" "Yes sir." "Then you must be a good deal older than you look."

Tourist (to yokel): "Can you tell me if I shall pass the 'Red Lion' on my way to Ashcombe?" Yokel: "Well—er—you might, but I shouldn't."

Rev. Mr. Arlington: "You should always be particular about details, Miss Tucker. It is the little things that tell." Nellie: "I know that. I have three small sisters."

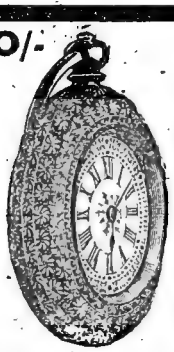
"Jimmy, my child," the fond mother exclaimed. "don't eat so much of that lobster salad. You'll be ill to-night." "Well, ma, if I am you'll know what's the matter with me, anyhow."

"What on earth are you engaged to three men for?" said Blanche to Sue. "You can't marry them all." "No," replied Sue, "but by working up a little competition among them I can probably induce one or the other to hurry up and earn enough to marry on."

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

30/-



THE LADY'S "SIGNAL" CENTRIQUE HUNTER.

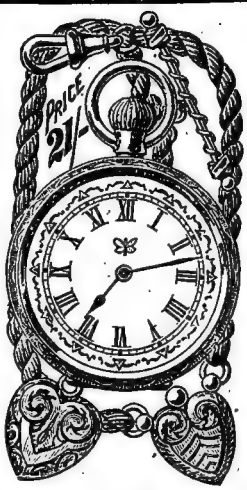
Awarded 9 PRIZE MEDALS.
WARRANTED 10 YEARS.
Our Wholesale Price to you
£1 : 10 : 0
Usual Retail Price 42s.

SEND 3/- ONLY

When we send Watch subject to 7 days' trial; if approved you can complete purchase by 9 monthly payments of 3s., or one payment of 27s., when we make you a present of any article to the value of 3s. as discount.

DESCRIPTION:

Jewelled Movement carefully adjusted and timed within 1 a minute per month, constructed on improved principles, richly ornamented dial. Gold hands, handsomely engraved Sterling Silver Case.

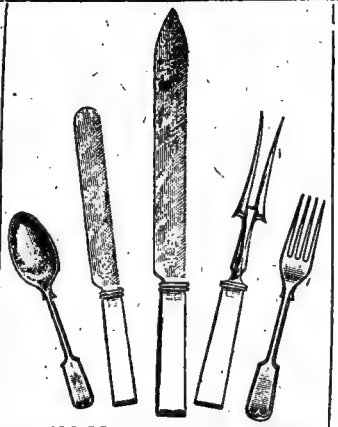


THE LADY'S "ECLIPSE" SILVER WATCH CHAIN AND PENDANT.

Price 21/-

Terms: 3s. 6d. deposit with order, and 7 monthly payments of 2s. 6d. The movement of this Watch is built on the most approved lines, to secure great timekeeping accuracy; choicely engraved Silver case. Prince of Wales' Pattern Chain, complete in case.

WARRANTED THREE YEARS.



THE "SHEFFIELD" PARCEL.

52 Pieces, 30s. Terms: 3s. deposit with order, and 9 monthly payments of 3s.

Each Parcel includes:

6 Table Knives	6 Dessert Knives
6 Table Forks	6 Dessert Forks
6 Dessert Spoons	2 Table Spoons
2 Salt Spoons	2 Mustard Spoons
6 Tea Spoons	6 Egg Spoons
1 Sugar Spoon	1 Sugar Tongs.

Also CARVER & FORK to match.

DON'T BE CONFUSED

by apparently similar parcels extensively advertised by retailers, the knives in which are of inferior workmanship and only bone-handled, and the forks and spoons common white metal. We guarantee every knife in the "Sheffield" Parcel to be of the finest hand-forged Sheffield steel, with xylonite ivory handles, which cannot discolour, and the forks and spoons are made of pure nickel.

55/-

THE LADY 'SOMERSET.'

14-carat GOLD Watch.
WARRANTED 5 YEARS.
OUR WHOLESALE PRICE TO OU
£2 : 15 : 0
Usual Retail Price, 70s.

SEND 5/6 ONLY

When we send this Gold Watch for 7 days' trial; if approved you complete purchase by 9 monthly payments of 5s. 6d., or one payment of 40s. 6d., when we present any article value 5s. 6d. as discount.

DESCRIPTION:

Excellent quality, Jewelled Movement, Gold balance, fitted in choicely engraved Solid 14-carat Gold Case, richly ornamented dial, with keyless attachment, 55s. Keywind, 60s.; 5s. monthly.

The Public are warned against purchasing cheap Gold Watches, the cases of which are not of sufficient strength to protect movement.

W. E. WATTS & CO. LTD., Whitminster Works. Offices: BRISTOL.

FREE

MINIATURE ILLUSTRATIONS of our GENUINE

STEEL-PLATE ENGRAVINGS

and beautiful Gravures will be Presented Entirely Free of Charge to every reader of *Short Stories* applying at the Offices of The City of London Fine Art Society, 5 Victoria Avenue, Bishopsgate, London, E.C., or will be forwarded to any Reader (at home or abroad) on receipt of above Coupon and one stamp for postage. Full size sample Picture sent on approval for two extra stamps for postage.

DON'T COUGH USE KEATING'S LOZENGES FOR YOUR COUGH.

ANY DOCTOR WILL TELL YOU, "there is no better Cough Medicine."—One gives relief; if you suffer from cough try them but once; they *will* cure, and they *will not* injure your health; an increasing sale of over 80 years is a certain test of their value. Sold in 1½d. tins.

ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently by taking TRILENE TABLETS (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

Send 2s. 6d. to THE TRILENE CO., Sole Proprietors, 66 Finsbury Pavement, London.

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 28lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

A GUINEA FOUNTAIN PEN for 2/6

After overcoming enormous difficulties we have succeeded in producing a genuine fountain pen which we shall sell for a short time at the astounding price of 2/6 post free. The pen, as advertised, consists of a beautifully-chased vulcanite barrel, finished with an "Imperial" gold band at top and bottom, with accurately-fitting cap, one of our everlasting wear real electro gold nibs, and adjustable feed, ensuring a uniform and perfect flow of ink. This illustration is an exact facsimile of this wonderful pen.

EXACT SIZE OF PEN.

Send us your order, together with Postal Order for 2/6, and you will receive pen by return post. Astounding value. Repeat orders rolling in.

Address: THE SWIFT FOUNTAIN PEN CO. (Dept. S.), 62 Cowcross Street, London, E.C.

Digitized by Google

. . CURATIVE . .

Vogeler's Compound

A WOMAN'S FACE.

EVERY one of the principal diseases and weaknesses to which women are subject, fade out the face, waste the figure, and make her in reality old before her time. Perfect health makes comely features, soft skin, and rosy cheeks. This can be accomplished by taking VOGELER'S CURATIVE COMPOUND, made from the formula of one of the most eminent living members of the medical profession, who has made a life-long study of the subject of purifying, cleansing, and enriching the blood. It regulates, promotes, and improves digestion, removes melancholia, nervousness, faintness, and dizziness, brings refreshing sleep and rest, restores health and strength, imparting vigour to the entire system. It acts directly on the liver, stomach, kidneys, and cleanses the blood from all impurities.

Every woman can have a clear complexion, steady nerves, a perfect digestion, abundant strength and vitality, and general good health, by taking Vogeler's Curative Compound.

IT IS THE QUEEN OF MEDICINES.

Sold by all Chemists and Stores, at 1/1½ & 2/6 3 or sent on receipt of 14 or 30 penny stamps.

A Picture of Health

Sole Proprietors,
ST. JACOB'S OIL LTD.,
45, Farringdon Rd.,
LONDON.

Vogeler's Cures

Mr. GEO. R. SIMS' HAIR RENEWER.

Called by him "TATCHO."

(Romany: "GENUINE," "GOOD," "TRUE.")

And why, pray, is the successful poet, playwright, and journalist an eminent authority on hair restorer? Eager for an explanation, a *Daily Mail* representative sought out Mr. Sims. . . .

Now Mr. G. R. Sims, as many people know, is one of the busiest men in the kingdom, but hastily affixing his signature to a letter, he looked up and extended a characteristically cordial welcome. Then he said: "I will explain. I found that I was rapidly going bald. Not seriously, you understand, but the thinning out was sufficiently marked to set me thinking out a remedy. I went to two specialists, both of whom cheerfully assured me that I should be absolutely bald in two years.

"Then I discovered the preparation which is now placed upon the market. **I found that I had hit upon a remedy capable of working wonders. Look at my hair now, isn't that convincing evidence of the value of my preparation.**

"Ladies confirm my good opinion of it as a dressing for daily use. Mrs. Brown Potter, whose beautiful hair is the admiration of the entire lady world, writes that she uses nothing but 'Tatcho.' There is nothing to prevent every woman from making her hair silken in texture and bountiful in volume, for she can obtain a bottle of 'Tatcho' now in every town or even village."

In order that the public may be able to test the superlative value of Mr. Geo. R. Sims' discovery, the Company is issuing large 4/6 size test bottles post free for **1/10**, under plain cover, one of which may be had on application. Please cut off the corner of this advertisement where marked, and send with name and address, legibly written, to the—

TATCHO OFFICES,

81c GREAT QUEEN STREET, LONDON, W.C.

Mr. GEO. R. SIMS' HAIR RENEWER

Large 4/6 Bottle Post 1/10 Free.

COUPON. S.S. .....1901.

Short Stories That . . . . . Make You Laugh.

We devote every week space in *Short Stories* to pithy, humorous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. To those readers who submit storyettes which are used, a six shilling novel will be awarded. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case, the source MUST be stated. Attempts must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, December 2nd. Post-cards only, please. The prize of £1 1s. for the best storyette published this week has been won by Mr. D. O. Jenkins, of 18 Windsor Street, Trecynon, Aberdare, whose contribution is denoted by an asterisk thus.*

His Trouble was Different.

"COME, old man," said the kind friend, "cheer up, there are others." "I don't mind her breaking the engagement so very much," said the despondent young man. "But to think that I have to go on paying the instalments on the ring for a year to come yet. That is what hurts me."

He Couldn't Bring it.*

A LITTLE boy went to a school for the first time at the age of six. On entering the school the master took out a book to enter new scholars' names and addresses. When the boy was asked the number on the door of his home he didn't know, so he was told to bring it next day. On entering the next day he was asked if he had brought it. The boy replied: "No, sir, it was nailed too tight to the door."

He Missed His First.

A SPEECH which had a pathetic as well as an amusing side is said to have been made by an old "down South" farmer on the occasion of his second wedding. "Neighbours," said he to those who had witnessed the simple ceremony, "you all know this good friend that's consented to marry me is something of a stranger in our town. Now, I feel kind of insufficient, being only a man, to make her acquainted with everybody as quick as I'd like to, so I'm a-going to depend on you women folk," he added, with a confiding smile at the members of the gentle sex, "to make her feel at home among us, just as my first wife would do if she was here to-day. I miss her consid'rable all the time, but more'n usual on an occasion like this."

An Enthusiastic Engine-driver.

I HEARD the other day of an engine-driver, employed on a little out-of-the-way line, who was exceedingly fond of football. One afternoon, the signals being against him, he pulled his train up, and then found that two schools were playing a match in the field just in front of him. The engine-driver was so intent on watching the game that he forgot all about the signal, and so did not see that it had been put down. A fussy old gentleman in the train, however, noticed that the signal was down, and called to the guard to know why the train was at a standstill. The guard went to the engine-driver. "What are you up to, Bill? Can't you see the signal down?" "Is it?" said the engine-driver, without looking up; "then you go and tell the chap in the box to shove it up again. I'm going to see this match out!"

The Sailor and his Watch.

"PAPA," said a little boy to his father, "are not sailors very small men?" "No, my dear. What gave you such an idea? Some sailors are very large and powerful men. What makes you think they are small?" "Because," said the little fellow, "I read the other day of a sailor going to sleep on his watch."

He Waited for Instructions.

A FEW years ago the native station-master of an out-of-the-way railway-station in India was suddenly attacked by a fierce man-eating tiger, made bold through hunger. The startled assistant immediately rushed to the telegraph office, and wired to the European station-master at the next place on the line as follows: "Tiger on platform, eating station-master. Please wire instructions."

They Followed Precedent.

A VISITOR from another town had been invited to address the village Sunday-school. "I am reminded, children," he said, "of the career of a boy who was once no larger than some of the little fellows I see before me. He played truant when he was sent to school, went fishing every Sunday, ran away from home when he was ten years old, learnt to drink, smoke tobacco, and play cards. He went into bad company, frequented stables and low tap-rooms, finally became a pick-pocket, then a forger, and one day, in a fit of drunkenness, he committed a cowardly murder! Children," he continued, impressively, "where do you think that boy is now?" "He stands before us!" cried the children, as with one voice.

Nursing His Fame.

IN a certain skirmish an officer got a slight scratch on his leg. The wound was a matter of great glory to him, and he nursed it through after days, growing lamer with every fear that the memory of his bravery might pass out of mind. One day, late in life, as he sat nursing his leg and pondering the glorious past, a young man, visiting the family for the first time, approached and sympathetically remarked, "Lame, Colonel?" "Yes, sir," after a pause, and with inexpressible solemnity; "I am lame." "Been riding, sir?" "No,"—with rebuking sternness—"I have not been riding." "Ah, slipped down on the pavement?" "No, sir," with actual ferocity. "Perhaps, then, you have sprained your ankle, sir?" With painful slowness the old man lifted his pet leg in both hands, set it carefully on the floor, rose slowly from his chair, and, looking down upon the unfortunate youth with mingled pity and wrath, burst forth in the sublimity of rage, "Go and read the history of your country, you confounded young puppy!"

A PRETTY BABY

Is the finest ornament a man can have in his house.

YOU CAN BUY 12 OF THEM,

A YARD OF BABIES, . . .

in fact, if you secure

Pearson's Christmas Number now.

Is your photo on page 682?

Digitized by Google

THE EDITOR'S PAGE.

A Half-guinea Fountain Pen will each week be awarded to the reader who is the sender of the most interesting query answered on this page.

THIS is the first week since the Photo Competition started that not a single £5 note has been claimed, in consequence of which five persons are the poorer by £5 each. Evidently my readers did not take the advice I gave them on this page of the issue dated November 9th about telling their friends of the competition. Five portraits appear again this week on page 582.

❦❦❦

ADVICE TO READERS ON VARIOUS MATTERS.

(Replies to Correspondents.)

"J. R." has been told that there is a dandy fish, so-called because it dresses itself up in some peculiar fashion in seaweed, and he wishes to know if this is so.

I do not find that there is any fish of that name. What "J. R." is probably thinking of is the "swell fish," so named, not because of the manner in which it entwines itself in seaweed, but because it is capable of inflating itself like a ball by swallowing air. Numerous specimens are to be found in the seas of most parts of the world.

"M. S." asks: "What is the steepest incline a man can walk up unaided by his hands?"

This depends entirely upon the surface of the incline, and upon the fact whether the man is barefooted or wearing boots. Under ordinary circumstances, however—that is to say, a man fully clothed, going up a macadam road—an angle of about fifty degrees is about as much as he can manage.

"Y. O."—The largest combs built by bees are to be found in India; they are as large as the door of an ordinary house. They hang from the branches of trees and from projecting ledges of rock. Bee-hunting is a professi n in India, and the hunters are very clever. The usual method is to ascend the tree and get above the comb, then lower a stick, with a bunch of ignited leaves at the end, under the busy creatures, who are soon driven away by the smoke. The hunters pass ropes round the comb, cut it away from the limb from which it depends, and lower the comb to the ground. Vast quantities of honey and wax are obtained in this way.

"H. L. U." asks: "Will the hide of a cow or the hide of a horse yield the most leather?"

To the uninitiated it would certainly appear that the horse, being the larger animal, would produce the most leather, but this is not the case. From an average cow's hide thirty-five pounds of leather can be obtained, while the hide of a horse is only good for half as much. Comparatively speaking, the horse is exceedingly thin-skinned, while a cow is as tough in its natural outer covering as it is in its restaurant steaks, if such a thing be possible.

"SECOND."—Your question is one which is received very often at this office, and should anything happen to prevent its arriving on any day, the members of the staff are almost as much depressed as if they had lost a dear relative. Here is the answer again, and really for the last time. Two balls, one of wood and one of lead, and of unequal weight, dropped from the top of a tower at the same time, will reach the ground at the same instant. The reason for this is that the resistance offered by the air to all solid bodies is the same, whatever their nature may be.

"GRACE" is in sore trouble. She has recently had bequeathed to her, among other things, a number of beautiful pearls. Several of these have no lustre whatever, and are of a dull grey colour, and the local jeweller tells "Grace" that these particular ones have lost most of their value. She adds: "I have tried polishing them, but it is of no use. What is the matter with them?"

Your pearls are what is called "sick." In all probability they have been locked up in some strong box for years past without getting a glimpse of daylight or breath of air. If this is the case you should expose them every day for some time to the sun, and moisten them occasionally. They are "dead" if at the end of a month there is no perceptible change in their tinge. If this happens they have no intrinsic value worth speaking of. Odd as it sounds, pearls, like mortals, require plenty of air and sunshine to keep them in good health, and the more perfect the pearl the more likely it is to be attacked by mortal illness.

"LADDIE."—The most useful household commodity is undoubtedly salt. Besides being employed to season eatables, it is a simple remedy for earache, toothache, and headache it will make cream freeze and butter come, it will take ink-stains out of cloth of any kind, it may be applied to cuts and wounds, to counteract frost and snow, to manure the ground, to ease the itching pain caused by irritable skin diseases, to produce vomiting or stop it as you please; in fact, it seems to be in every way indispensable.

"NELLIE" has broken off her engagement with a young gentleman after they have been corresponding for five years. She is anxious to know how his letters ought to be returned.

Why not employ a furniture removal van, and get the whole thing over in one journey?

"HOUSEWIFE" has been reading a paper in which the fact is mentioned that allowing the sun to shine on mirrors is injurious to them. "Can this really be true?" she asks.

Most decidedly it can. The action of the rays of light on the quicksilver which backs a looking-glass has the effect of finally rendering it incapable of reflecting an image. Therefore, "Housewife," keep your looking-glass away from the sun—and from the daughters also, if you are able.

"JENNY P." writes: "Will you please be kind enough to tell me if bread can be made with sea-water, and if so, are there any benefits to be derived from eating a loaf of the kind?"

My first impulse was to smile at your query, "Jenny P.," but the smile soon died out, for on inquiry I find that bread made in the fashion you describe is exceedingly nourishing, and especially so for those persons who suffer from wasting diseases. The bread is not at all salt, but, oddly enough, has a sweetish taste. Of course, the sea-water is allowed to stand undisturbed for a long time before being mixed with the flour, so that all impurities may have an opportunity of sinking.

"T. E. R." asks: "In which European country is the largest proportion of the population married?"

From the published statistics it appears that Hungary leads the way with 407 out of every 1,000. France comes next on the list, whilst the smallest proportion is found in Portugal, where only 310 out of every 1,000 of the population taste the bliss of wedded life.

Printed by HORACE COX, Bream's Buildings, London, E.C., and published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., Pearson's Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

ALKAN

Cures in One Minute.

Cures in One Minute.

ALKAN ALKAN

CURES IN ONE MINUTE

(By Inhalation)

HEADACHE. TOOTHACHE. FACIAL NEURALGIA. EARACHE.

SOME TESTIMONIALS.

Trentham, Stoke-on-Trent.

HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF S————, writes:—
That she thinks the "Alkan" Anti-Neuralgic Water an excellent remedy, and has also given it to friends with good results.
Kindly send Her Grace two more bottles of "Alkan," the same size as the last.

MRS. KENDAL,
The eminent Actress, writes:—
That she has used the "Alkan" Anti-Neuralgic Water with entirely satisfactory results, gives full permission to use her name in extolling the virtues of this excellent remedy for neuralgia, and has no hesitation in highly recommending it to all sufferers from this distressing pain.

THE EARL OF ROSSLYN writes:
Your Neuralgic medicine did my head a great deal of good, and I am glad to say I introduced it to a friend, on whom it had an equally satisfactory result. I will recommend it.

23 St. James's Place, S.W.

THE RIGHT HON. The EARL OF WEMYSS, writes:—
It certainly did me good, and I have accordingly recommended it to friends.

10 Upper Dorset Street, Bryanston Square, W.
I have tried "Alkan" Anti-Neuralgic Water on several of my patients, and I have found it a very valuable remedy. The relief of acute face-ache is instantaneous.
R. THOROLD WILLIAMS, L.R.C.P., &c., Surgeon.

PRICE, 1st size, 2/9; 2nd size, 4/6 per Bottle.

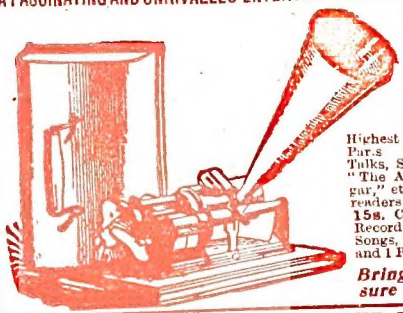
Sent post paid from Depôt to any part of the United Kingdom on receipt of price.
May be obtained from all Chemists and Stores.
If unobtainable locally send stamps or P.O. to the Sole Proprietors.
THE ALKAN Ltd., General Depot: 150 STRAND, LONDON, W.C.
(2 doors west of Somerset House.)

Digitized by Google

"THE MACHINE THAT TALKS."

CAMPBELL'S CRAPHOPHONE is the best Talking and Singing Machine in the Market at the Price

A FASCINATING AND UNRIVALLED ENTERTAINER FOR THE HOME CIRCLE.

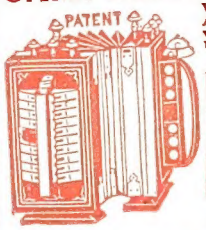


CAMPBELL'S HOME GRAND GRAPHOPHONE. This is no German manufacture, but the new American 20th Century Talking Machine, which gained the Highest Awards at the Paris Exhibition, 1900. Talks, Sings, and recites "The Absent-Minded Beggar," etc. Special price to readers of *Short Stories*, **£2 15s.** Carriage paid, with 4 Records free. 2 Vocal Songs, 1 Orchestral Piece, and 1 Recitation.

Brings Endless Pleasure into the Home.

CHARMING MUSIC FOR THE HOME.

CAMPBELL'S Gold Medal MELODEONS



With Organ and Celestial Tone, and Sweet Bell Accompaniments. **No Home should be without one.** *No Knowledge of Music required.* Used throughout the world.

200,000 TESTIMONIALS.

Special Offer to the Readers of *Short Stories*.
Campbell's "Gem" Melodeons, price only 6/9
Campbell's "Miniature" Melodeon, „ 10/9
Campbell's "Paragon" Melodeon, „ 14/-
Campbell's "Favourite" Melodeon, „ 16/6
Cut out this and send P.O.O. for the amount.
Either sent carriage paid to any address in Great Britain & Ireland.

All lovers of music should at once send for Campbell's New Illustrated Privilege Price List of all kinds of Musical Instruments for Season 1901-2, now ready. 200,000 sent out yearly. Send 1d. Stamp to—
CAMPBELL & Co., Musical Instrument Makers, 116 Trongate, GLASGOW.
Established 57 Years. BEWARE OF WORTHLESS IMITATIONS

Price Reduced.
Quality Maintained.

GENUINE

DUNLOP TYRES

at 55/- PER PAIR.

With Wired or beaded edges.

GUARANTEED FOR THIRTEEN MONTHS.

Of all Cycle Agents.

The Dunlop Pneumatic Tyre Co. Ltd.,

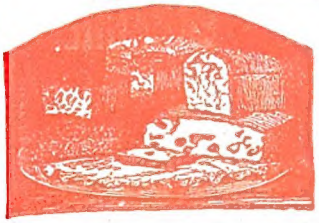
PARA MILLS, ASTON CROSS, BIRMINGHAM; AND BRANCHES.

JOHN HILL & SON'S

RICH CAKES.

PURE. WHOLESOME. DELICIOUS.

12,000,000 Fresh Eggs used Annually.



FREE!

"PING PONG"

On receipt of **3D.**

In Stamps to cover postage, a sample of the above will be forwarded. Total weight about ½lb.

JOHN HILL & SON Ltd., Tudno Cake Factories, Ashton-under-Lyne.

FOR ALL FRYING & COOKING.

HUGON'S "Atora" BEEF SUET

OF ALL GROCERS & PROVISION DEALERS.

FOR PLUM PUDDINGS, MINCE MEAT, PIE CRUST & CAKES.

Sample 1lb Box and Book of Recipes sent for 8½d in stamps.

HUGON & Co LTD. PENDLETON MANCHESTER.

May be obtained from all Underclothing Houses and Chemists.

2 doz. No. 1 at 1/-;
1 doz. No. 2 at 1/-;
1 doz. No. 3 at 1/6;
Post Free.

LADIES SAY THAT THE "Mene" SANITARY TOWELS

ARE SUPERIOR TO ALL OTHER MAKES.

FOR CLEANLINESS, COMFORT, AND ECONOMY.

A FREE SAMPLE To any Lady naming this Paper.

MISS HAYNES,
55 Fann Street, LONDON, E.C.

DELICIOUS: MILD-CURED: GENUINE

YORKSHIRE HAMS.

10lbs. to 14 lbs. at 1/- per lb; 21lbs. at 11½ per lb; 28 lbs. at 11/- per lb.

All in prime condition—Warranted.

ALSO YORKSHIRE BACON.

BANKS & Co YORK